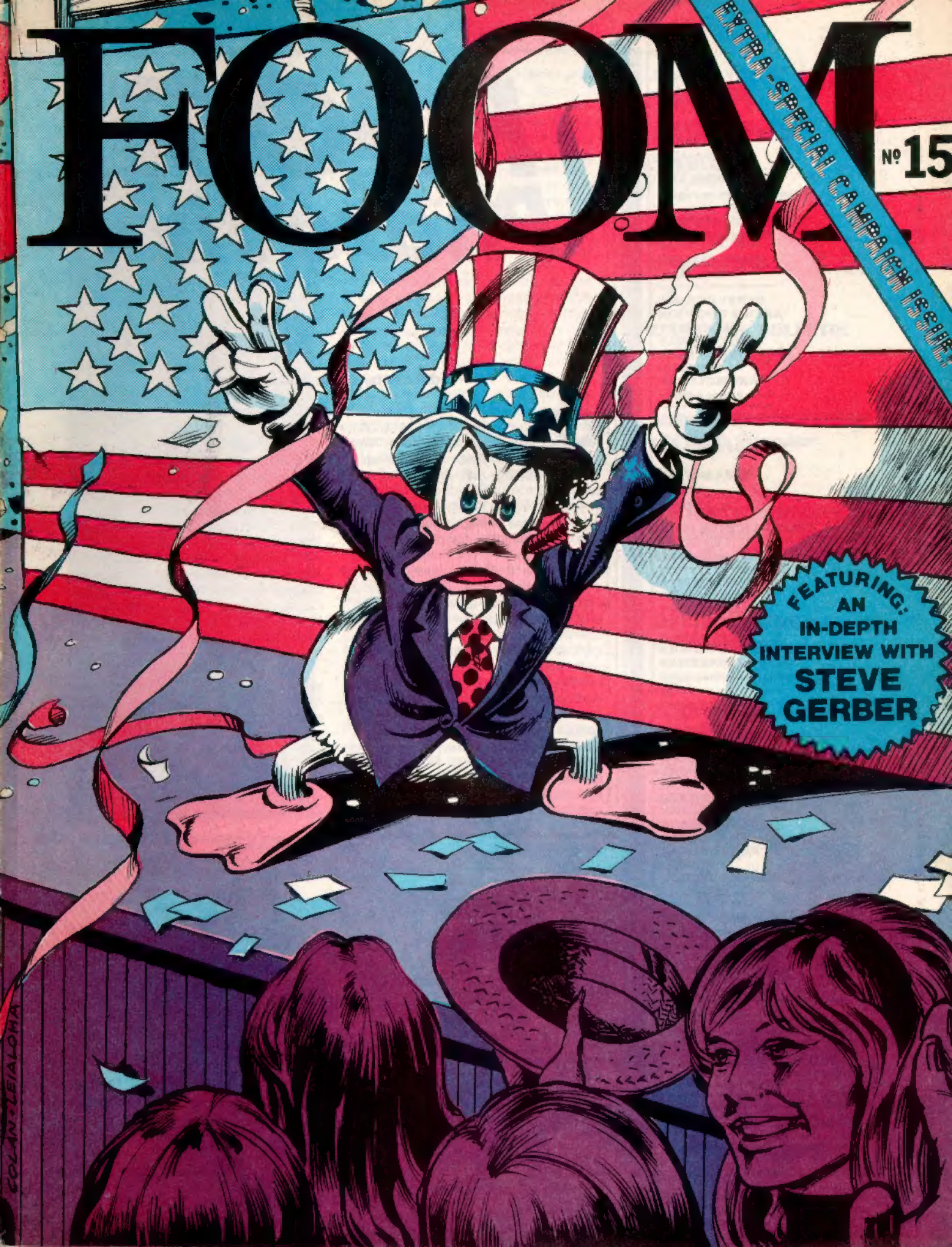
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№15
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FEATURING:
AN
IN-DEPTH
INTERVIEW WITH
STEVE
GERBER
COLAN-LEIALOHA

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publisher

DAVID KRAFT
editor

JIM SALICRUP
DUFFY VOHLAND
associate idea-mongers

SOL BRODSKY
keeper of the kash

MARIE SEVERIN
lovely lady

GERRY CONWAY
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JOHN WARNER
LEN WEIN
MARV WOLFMAN
consulting editors

RALPH MACCHIO
minister of
inFOOMation

NORA MACLIN
& DAK
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LEN GROW
production

NAOMI BASNER
BETH BLECKLEY
FLUFFY DUFFY
DAVE THE DUDE
AL SATIAN
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D. JON ZIMMERMAN
and assorted anonymous
armadillos
photographers

DAN ADKINS
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and the whole
blamed bullpen

friends of ol' marvel

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FOOM Phase Six

Editorial by David Anthony Kraft

Question: What do Steranko, Tony Isabella, Scott Edelman, Duffy Vohland, Chris Claremont and myself have in common?

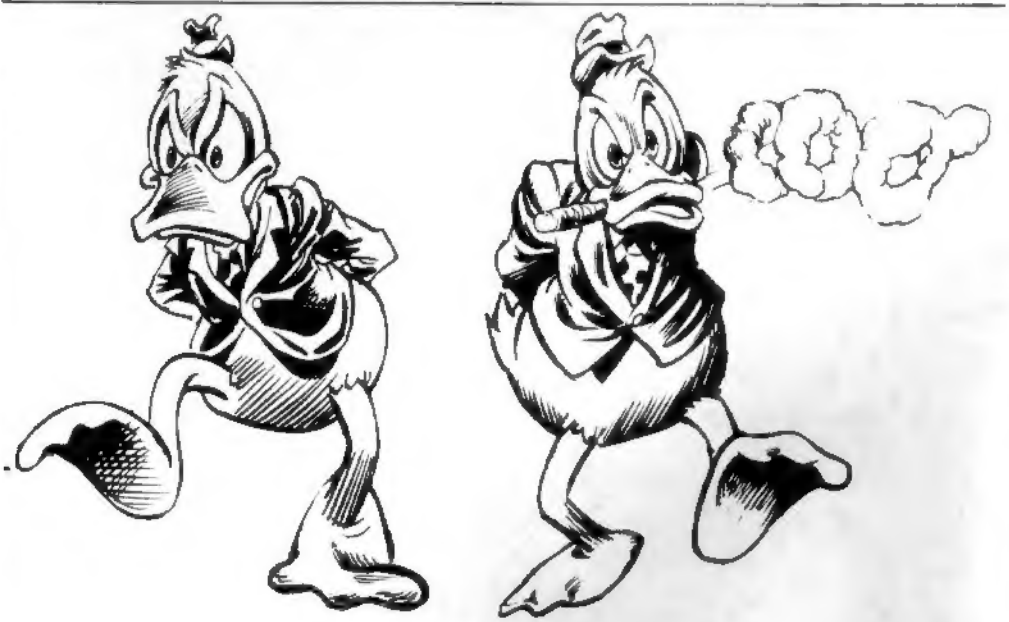
Answer: We've all had the enlightening experience of editing Marvel's madcap fan magazine — and, reckoning accordingly, this is FOOM Phase Six.

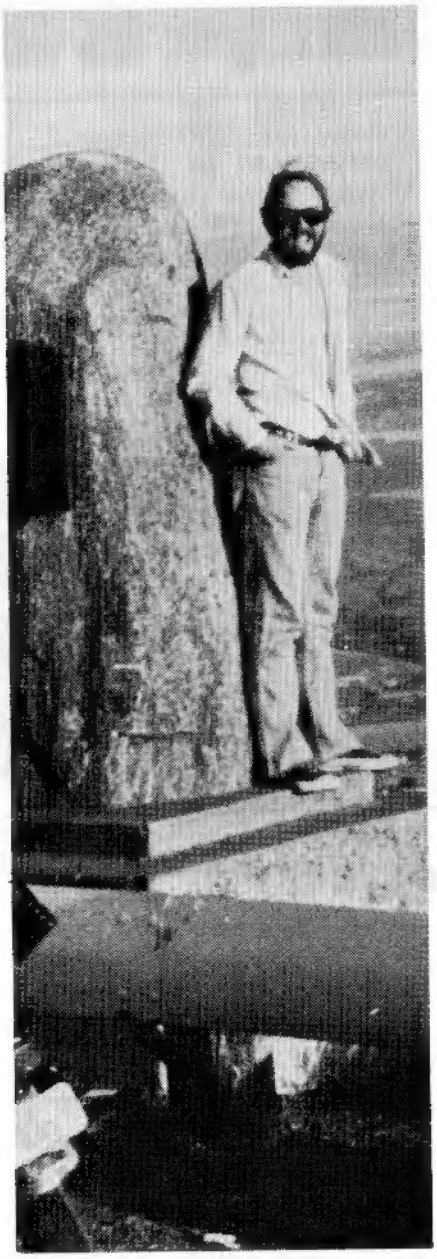
I suppose a modest introduction of sorts is in order here. So be it. I'm a Gemini, of course, afflicted with all the attendant introspection and inner conflict that comes with that astrological sign. At 24, I'm also a free lance fanatic and student of life, eking out a Bohemian existence in the great heart of inflation. At different times in the past I have been Associate Editor of both Marvel's color comics and black-and-white magazines; too, at one time or another, I have written Dracula, Man-Wolf, Iron Fist and Thor for Marvel. I'm a motorcycle maniac, a science fiction freak, and a lover of loud rock music. And I look funny (see accompanying photo).

Okay, now that all that's out of the way, you're probably wondering how my advent in the editorial chair will affect FOOM. A few new features are in the works, such as the page of absolutely last-minute newsflashes that makes its appearance this issue; some favorite old features will return, such as Bullpen biographies like those about Gene Colan and Steve Leialoha in this ish; the *Mighty Marvel Mini-Items* department is back to stay; and, of course, all the usual fantastic FOOM features will abound.

As always, Marvelites, your own sensational suggestions are solicited on how to make FOOM the best fanzine ever devoted to a blushin' Bullpen. Who would you like to see interviewed? What type of behind-the-scenes information interests you? What have you always wanted to know about Marvel?

Next, you're no doubt wondering whatever happened to the interviews





with Jack Kirby and John Warner that were promised in previous issues. I know, it seems like an impossible coincidence, but not when you consider the capricious set of circumstances that has continually beleagured our bumbling Bullpen; in other words, they were *lost*. Both of them. However, we did consult each of the aforementioned gentlemen for this meaty installment of *InFOOMation*, so all was not abandoned and at least some of their own words appear at last.

Unfortunately, as I'm sure you've noticed, we had to raise the price of this book a couple issues ago; the escalating economy is by now self-explanatory; but what you may not have noticed is that you're getting more than *twice* as much content, despite the fact that we have not added any extra pages. How was this seemingly magickal feat accomplished? Through the simple expedient of using much smaller typefaces. If you compare this issue of FOOM to one from about three years ago, you'll easily be able to note the difference — we're putting about twice as many words on a page!

Some special features scheduled for future numbers of FOOM are an in-depth interview with Marie (the She) Severin, a spectacular Stan Lee issue, a detailed text/photo study of exactly how a comic book is created (from inception through production to the newsstand), an intensive interview with Jazzy Johnny Romita, the Irving Awards, and far more frenetic photos and fact-packed features than ever before!

All right, I've primed you properly for FOOM Phase Six. Now you're on your own to oggle this *waugh*-boggling HOWARD THE DUCK campaign issue. Keep your feathers dry, your webbed feet clean, and your beak held high.

'Nuff said! —DAK

CATACLYSMIC CONTENTS:

FOOM PHASE SIX
editorial
2

MIGHTY MARVEL MINI-ITEMS
titanic tidbits
4

CAMPAIGN BULLETIN
hard sell hoopla
6

STEVE GERBER SPEAKS
the foom interview
7

ABOUT THE ARTISTS
gene colan
steve leialoha
14

DEPT. OF INFOOMATION
inside info
16

FOOM FINAL FLASHES
late-breaking news
29

BRITISH FEATURE PAGE
captain britain
30

NEXT ISSUE
a sneak peak
31

this issue is
de**DUCK**ated to:

STEVE GERBER
VAL MAYERIK
FRANK BRUNNER
JOHN BUSCEMA
GENE COLAN
STEVE LEIALOHA

MIGHTY MARVEL

WHAT DO CAPTAIN AMERICA & TINY TIM HAVE IN COMMON?

In another in an unending series of indications that Mighty Marvel has influenced everyone from Godfrey to Godzilla, Timorous *Tiny Tim* has admitted that he drew his deepest inspiration from an early issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA comics! But let's let him tell it, as quoted from the new hardcover book, TINY TIM by Harry Stein (Playboy, $8.50). *Take it away, Tiny. . . !*

"The way Captain America and me took to each other was like a miracle. It was l-o-v-e at first sight. He was responsible for getting me a middle name. I decided to call myself Buckingham, after. . . Bucky. I'll tell you another important way comics influenced my life. I decided to take the violin. . . and for only one reason. At the time there was this guy in CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS—a villain, a real mad maniac—who drove people crazy playing the violin. And that really appealed to me."

Indeed. And for those madcap Marvelites intent on comparing the world-famous warbler of "Tiptoe Through the Tulips" to the heinous villain after which he frivolously fashioned himself, we reproduce a panel here from CAP #7, October 1941, along with a snaggled snapshot of Tiny.

How to Leave Marvel in Style!

by Marv Wolfman

When I first decided it was time to turn in my editorial reign to a younger, more action-packed editor — one who could replace the tired, crumbling husk I'd become after toiling in the Bullpen nigh on to four years — little did I realize the shock that would await me on my last day as ... Editor-In-Chief.

It was work as normal, a small farewell party after which my loyal staff tossed me from our sixth floor window as they prepared to usher in their new boss — the man who would affect their incomes during the following year. So, after scraping myself off the sidewalk, I returned home, sad to see my nine-to-five days were over, but happy to know I could sleep as late as I wished the next morning.

Here I am, holding the unholy cake. Michele supplied a wooden knife to cut it with, but each time we removed the knife, the cake mysteriously re-appeared.

I've made plenty of mistakes in my past – and here I am, eating my own words once again.

Dinner was excellent — in attendance were Len and Glynis Wein, Mark Hanerfeld, and, of course, my wife Michele. But it was after dinner that the shock came. The lights went out and suddenly, from the darkness, I saw two eyes blazing in the night. Heart beating, I frantically switched on the lights and saw it—

Resting on the kitchen table was a huge cake . . . but a cake which had been designed as a panel from TOMB OF DRACULA! That's right, Meticulous Michele had bribed Stephanie Crookston, owner and chief baker of CREATIVE CAKES in New York, to bake a full Dracula cake — complete with zip-a-tone shading that was as good to eat as to look at.

And a special No-Prize personally non-autographed by all in attendance to the first FOOM reader who can tell us on what page and from which panel the cake was taken (the dialogue was, of course, cut down — you know how us ex-editors like to ramble on).

This is the lovely Stephanie Crookston, who baked the furshlugginer thing; don't know how you did it, Steph, but WOW! It's things like this which make you wanna leave the Bullpen every day! (Just kidding, Stan!)

MINI-ITEMS

JACK'S JACKET

And, while we're on the subject of Marvel hi-jinx in hardcovers, we thought you'd get a charge out of the jolting jacket design for *Stefan Themerson's* pseudo-philosophical parable, PROFESSOR MMAA'S LECTURE (Overlook Press, $8.95). It incorporates, you've no doubt noticed, two pandemonious panels of early Ant Man art by ol' *Jack* (King) *Kirby* himself—and therein lies another mighty mini-item contest! A FOOMtabulous No-Prize will be awarded to the first frantic FOOM fan who correctly names the title and issues where the art originally appeared. Seems like the whole world's gone Marvel mad—and here's your chance to finally benefit from it, faithful ones!

WHICH WITCH WAS WHICH?

Sorry, folks, but we had ya fooled—absolutely no one correctly identified the eight witches and warlocks pictured in FOOM #12! Guess we'll have to hold onto that No-Prize for the winner of this issue's contest. But just to set the record straight, the characters in question are (from left to right): *Karnilla* (from THOR), *Glinda* (from WIZARD OF OZ), *Wicked Witch of the West* (also from OZ), Sir Nigel Carruthers, *Warlock Prime* (from SILVER SURFER #12), *Clea* (from DR. STRANGE), *Enchantress* (from AVENGERS), *Warlock* (from his own book), and—absolutely no one got this—Dr. Doom's mystical *mother* (from FF)!

ROCK RAVES

It's no secret that sinister *Alice Cooper*, spooky star of the rock stage, is one of Marvel's many admirers. The persona he projects on his albums and during his sensational live show is larger-than-life, and continues to evolve, just like our own ever-lovin' characters. Or, as Cooper puts it, "I just flip myself onto Automatic Pilot and out comes Alice, just like a Marvel comic book character... I think they're the only really hip comics, y'know. Alice's character is changing a little bit... just like any character. You can understand that...if you keep Peter Parker the same way, he gets boring. You gotta keep changing around." We can dig it, Coop!

*

Meanwhile, *Paul McCartney's* wildly successful *Wings* tour was The Event of Summer '76, and throughout it all ex-Beatle Paul performed his rock riff, "Magneto and Titanium Man," while displayed above stage was an awesome accompanying illustration of Marvel's own Magneto, Titanium Man and Crimson Dynamo, as drawn by George Tuska, in a collage especially prepared by Prancin' *Paty Greer* in our own pulsatin' production department. Thanks again, Paul, for pluggin' our furshlugginer fiends—but when are ya gonna finish that blamed Daredevil disc?

*

Kiss comix? Could be! Blood-spurting stage-vampire *Gene Simmons* and his fellow rock fanatics are Marvel freaks, and Smilin' *Stan* himself has been cooped up with Strange *Steve Gerber* in a secret conference that could change comics history— but so far nothing's for certain, FOOM fans, so stay tuned for further developments!

WHAT'S THE INSIDE STORY?

Sweeping science fiction fandom and college campuses alike is a truly wog-boggling trilogy of far-out fantasies, known collectively as ILLUMINATUS, by *Robert Shea* and *Robert Anton Wilson* (Dell, $1.50 per volume). What's that got to do with Marvel? Funny you should ask. See, these are three of the most trippy tomes this side of FINNEGAN'S WAKE, and the stunning inside story is that they manage to somehow incorporate almost every phase of everything... including magnificent Marvel! Yeah, that's right, comics completists, several of our cavortin' characters are capriciously woven somewhere into the intricate weave of these titanic tales—and we'll leave it to you to follow our lead from there! (And be prepared for some mind-mixing experiences, Marvelites!)

This year, the Nation celebrates two hundred years of political quackery by offering its citizens a choice for their leadership from between a Grand Rapids rattletrap and a well-oiled peanut with a roasted-in-the-shell smile.

Well, heck . . . what's another four-year debacle?

We Americans are, after all, a hardy people. We've survived more political and social traumas in the past twenty years than most nations face in a thousand. Korea. McCarthy. The Cold War. The Cuban missiles. Assassinations. Vietnam. Watergate. Campus unrest. Urban unrest. Resthome unrest. And all the rest. We like our sociology spicy.

On the other hand, some of us think we've been living in this bowl of chili too long. Some of us think it's time for a change—not retrogression to some imagined idyllic past, but a brash, bold bump into the future. Some of us who think that way are throwing our support to HOWARD THE DUCK In 1976, because, in the Duck's own words, "I'll throw it right back atcha."

The politics of responsiveness. Ain't it grand?

Well, some of us think it is. And some of us think that you, too, owe it to yourself, your God, your country, and your Great Aunt Jennie to throw your support after our support—good after bad, as it were. Or perhaps pearls after swine. Whatever. It's getting late, and some of us don't think so good in the wee hours of the morning.

Anyway, it's like this. We've got this nifty HTD Presidential Button for sale, see? It's red, white, blue and duck-colored. It measures two inches in every direction except thick. And some of us think you should buy one. If you think so, too, you should send $1.00 plus 25¢ postage & handling for each button you want to HOWARD's campaign headquarters.

And that's not all . . . pilgrim.

If you send another $1.25 to the same address, you've doomed yourself to receive the super-deluxe HTD Campaign Portrait, an 8x10 duck-lover's dream, printed in warm sepia tones on heavy stock, and suitable for framing. It's mailed direct to you in plain brown biodegradable wrapping, suitable for throwing away, after your support.

Use the handy coupon below to order yours. And remember, some of us are watching you!

Okay, Duck-O, shoot the works! Here's the campaign paraphernalia I want:

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I promise to use my buttons & portrait only in self-defense. Same goes for my body.

The Foom interview:

Steve Gerber

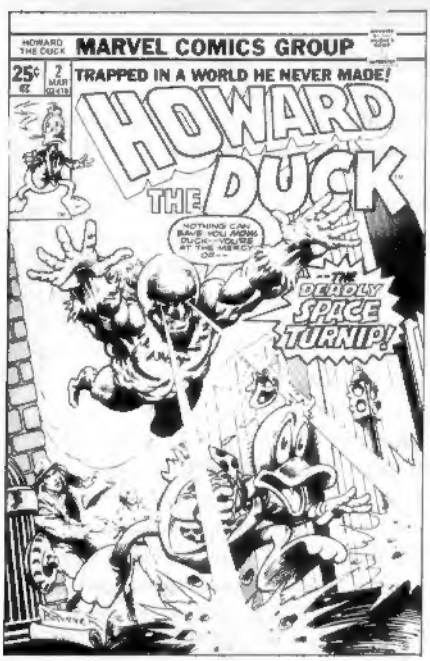
Conducted by
David Anthony Kraft

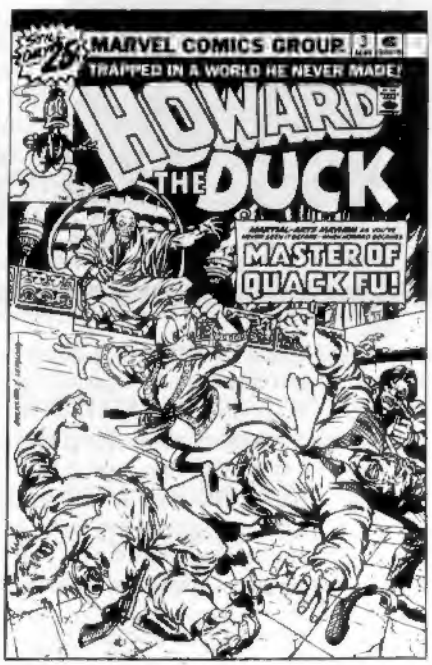
Articulate, bursting with ideas and opinions, Steve (Baby) Gerber is an absolute wonder to interview – even at 5 o'clock on a muggy Monday morning. He was born 20 September 1947 in St. Louis, Missouri, and graduated from St. Louis University in 1969 with a major in Radio-TV Communications and a minor in Creative Writing. Steve stands six feet tall, has black hair, brown eyes, and is nearsighted ("extremely – which may also account for some of the opinions expressed in this interview," he admits anxiously.) Despite a pronounced distaste for melodrama in his scripting, he nonetheless persists in living a very melodramatic life. He can't help it; it's an unconscious compulsion. Gerber is also paranoid, and at one point attempted to pass this feature off as an interview with a Life Model Decoy. Gifted with a talent for the weird and offbeat, Steve is the driving force behind that feisty little fowl, Howard the Duck. And now, let's let Steve speak for himself . . .

FOOM: What kind of childhood did you have?

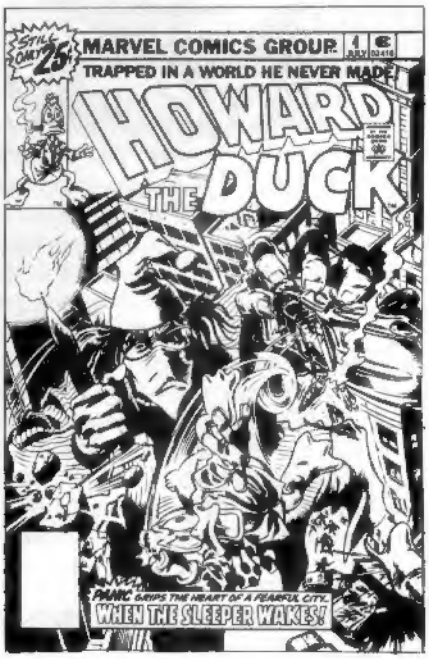
STEVE: Dull. Well, not *really* dull. I got involved with some pretty strange escapades from time to time. I grew up in a middle-class suburban community, went through the same school system my whole life, lived in the same house from the time I was born until the time I was 22 and married, and then moved into another dwelling. I don't think there was enough instability in the events of my life; any instability was internal. After awhile, with that much sameness in one's existence, if some variety or even some danger doesn't creep in occasionally, and the person is at all a thinking person, I believe he starts to go insane. And, really, that's what happened to me, I think, at some point. I reached a crisis where rebellion became not something fashionable, not something even governed by any particular principles, just something I had to do in order to keep my mind alive. My home had become an anaesthetic, and it was like I was living under that anesthetic, just listening to the voices of my mother and father and brothers and sisters and the television set, which was on constantly, and receiving no new input, so I got involved in the whole hippie culture, but without any deeply-felt commitment. I was a participant/observer, one step back from everything. Close enough to touch, and close enough to get hurt a couple of times, but never fully committed to it. I spent a lot of time in Gaslight Square, which was St. Louis' one-block Greenwich Village, and came in contact with people who were doing drugs and doing the whole flowers and beads thing, and I was involved with the protest against the Viet Nam War. But I was always too academic, too conscientiously critical, to throw myself into it totally. There seemed to be a certain shallowness of philosophy, somehow, and beyond that, even, there was a lot of violence associated with that culture, at least by the time it got to St. Louis in '67 or '68. It was the hippie scene, but it was mixed with the bikers, the Hell's Angels types; also, there was still a decided residue of grease, because St. Louis is kind of a half-breed city. It's sort of Southern, and sort of Midwestern, but it really isn't either. There's a tendency to violence among people in that area of the country, there's no way around that. The easiest way to solve an argument is, y'know, to fight it out, because they don't like to mess with words.

FOOM: Isn't that a correlation to the standard solution in comic book stories?
STEVE: Yeah, it is. It is. I found most of those people, incidentally, to be fascinated with comic books at the time. I loaned my entire *SPIDER-MAN* collection to a houseful of hippies for awhile, and they avidly read through all of them, about a hundred issues.
FOOM: When did you first decide to become a writer — and why?
STEVE: I knew I was going to be a writer, back when I was about five years old, because there didn't really seem to be much else worth doing. That's it. It's the only profession I could think of that looked like it would hold any interest for me.
FOOM: So how did you get into comics?
STEVE: I found out about comic books from watching television. The first contact I ever had with comic books in any form was the *Superman* TV show, and I was utterly fascinated by it. Then, when I found out there were printed stories about this guy, I became interested in those, too, and that led to Batman, and that led to the original Captain Marvel, and that led to about twelve years of reading things, y'know, right up through the first issue of the *FANTASTIC FOUR* and so on. I got into the business as a result of meeting Roy Thomas and corresponding with him for about ten years, off and on, through one of Julius Schwartz's letters pages in an early issue of *Hawkman*.
FOOM: But you're both from St. Louis?
STEVE: Roy's from Jackson, Missouri, which is about 120 miles south of St. Louis, so we saw each other infrequently, and when he moved to Arnold to teach at Fox High School, we saw each other more frequently. Arnold is almost a suburb of St. Louis. And after he went to New York — first to work for National for about a week, and then to Marvel — I came up to visit him for a couple of weeks over vacation the year I graduated from high school. Met Stan for the first time during those two weeks, and then some seven years later I had





graduated from college and gone through a couple years of graduate school and was working in an advertising agency — and suffocating — and wrote a letter to Roy that said, "Help! I'm dying. Do something!" It came exactly at the time, luckily, that he was promoted to editor and Stan was appointed publisher, and they were talking about expanding the line greatly. I was taken on as an editorial assistant, and that's how I wound up working in comics.
FOOM: Do you have any regrets?
STEVE: Do I have any regrets that I left advertising behind? None. Do I have any regrets that I got into comics? No. Do I have any regrets that I've stayed here this long? Oh, reams and volumes! A lot of things have happened since I've been in the business that I regret, I guess, but it's silly to bother with them. That's passed; I'm more concerned about the future.
FOOM: Who are your influences?
STEVE: Stan. Roy. Gerry Conway was very helpful when I got into the business. In terms of other literary influ-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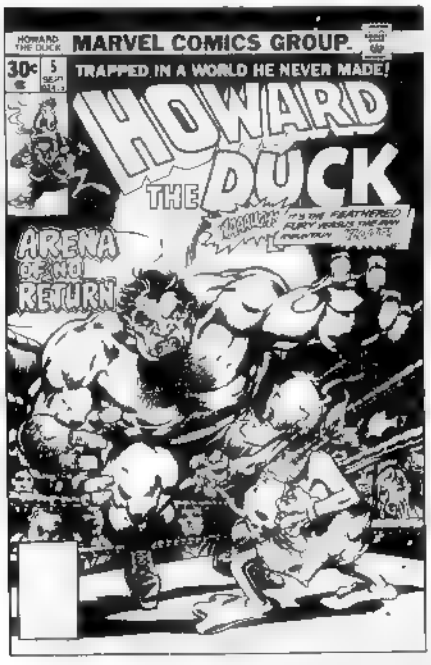
ences, it's very strange, because I didn't read much when I was a kid. I'm reading more now than I ever have at any previous time in my life. So essentially I created my writing style out of my own facility with words. I've been told that it resembles various writers' styles; they seem to be, generally, people who have the same background as myself — Jewish home, middle class, growing up in the 40s and 50s, that sort of thing. I find that interesting, 'cause I have almost really no literary background, despite the fact that one of my studies was English and another was Creative Writing and Communication. I really had very few influences in the past. I'm influenced now by everything I read, and consciously incorporate certain aspects of that input into my work, ex-

perimentally. But there's nobody I can point to, really, as a major influence, except possibly The Beatles. Seriously

FOOM: Who do you write for — yourself, the fans, or the editor?

STEVE. None of the above The stories — generally, at their best — seem to tell themselves. I don't ordinarily start with a particular theme or message in mind I'll begin plotting a story, and it'll take its own direction, and if it's a *good* story, then it'll be written the way it told itself to me, rather than my trying to shape it in any particular direction Sometimes, of course, there are conscious things you do with structure and with pacing, and that sort of thing, but the actual events of the story and the particular characterizations and things are generally determined by the story or the interplay of the



characters, themselves

FOOM: Doesn't that mean you please yourself?

STEVE: Well, let's put it this way: When a story presents itself to me that way, it generally pleases me, it sometimes pleases the readers, and it almost never pleases the editors. (Laughter.)

FOOM. Do you feel any sense of moral obligation to the readers of comics?

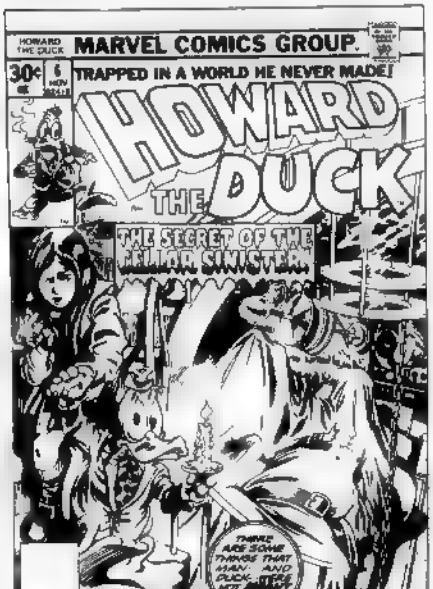
STEVE: The same obligation I feel to any other human being — not to lie to them. Beyond that — no. Maybe if you defined "moral obligation" more clearly. Do you mean to educate them, or to uplift them, or what?

FOOM Specifically, then, do you think violence is a necessary part of comics?

STEVE: I think that, yes, actually violence is a necessary part of comics as they're structured today, because, y'know, as I define violence that's the Hulk punching the Abomination in the face or Spider-Man wading into a gang of bank robbers and punching them out and tying them up with webs and leaving them for the police. I mean, we euphemize that and call it "action," because nobody *bleeds* in those sequences. I find the hero/villain aspects the dullest things about any of the books. I've always been much more interested in the interplay of personalities. I do feel — and this gets back to what I said about a moral obligation — that showing somebody being pounded into the ground, and depicting neither combatant suffering pain from it *is* lying, in a sense, and so to that extent, y'know, I think that the same moral obligaion holds

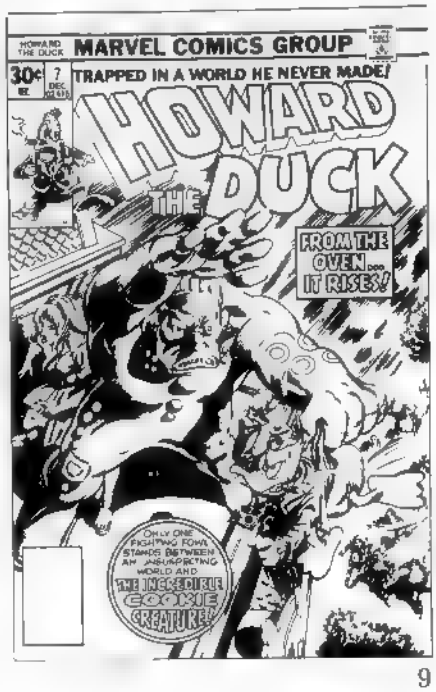
FOOM: I remember you were having a crisis of sorts, a year ago, about the violence and whether there was anything positive in the comics.

STEVE: I've never completely resolved that crisis. Violence is generally presented as a solution to problems in comics, because, being the illustrated form that they are, they tend to over-simplify, reduce everything to its most basic. Pure



Good vs. Pure Evil, for example, is a conflict which rarely occurs in the real world. It's a set of circumstances that doesn't exist. The way comics are structured now, they teach very positive values and brutal means for achieving them. And readers tend, I think, to take this bizarre lesson seriously, as if it were real. It's why I would prefer, say, to be

doing a strip like *HOWARD THE DUCK* to a strip like ... well ... I could say Spider-Man, but even my own character, *OMEGA*, because with the duck there's a certain amount of unreality presupposed. The creature himself is unreal, and so you can forgive certain other reductivist and retrograde tendencies of the medium. The problem with a strip like *OMEGA*, where the characters are at least pretenses at reality, is that you can never go far enough, you can never show how filthy those streets are in Hell's Kitchen, you can never show the dope dealers in the corridors of the school that James Michael attends, because the code won't allow it; you can't show what would really happen to somebody if they got beat up as badly as John was beaten up by Nick and his hoods, because even though those kids



see it every day, it's simply not allowed because it's not "within the bounds of good taste."

FOOM: Are you reaching for anything beyond commercial success with your comic writing?

STEVE: I question your wording there, because I don't think I'm reaching for it; I think I would like to achieve it, but it's not conscious effort most of the time. There are times — like the kung fu story in the Duck book — where I have a particular message I want to get across, and I wanted to do that in a way that would be commercially viable, because I wanted the book to sell and get into people's hands so that they would see the message.

FOOM: Is there anything you think *shouldn't* be depicted in comics?

STEVE: No. Absolutely not. I don't think there's any aspect of life that people shouldn't know about. Ignorance is not bliss. Ignorance is a trap; the less you're aware of, the more easily you can be deceived and seduced. I don't think there's *anything* that shouldn't be presented in comic books, no matter how horrible or, for that matter, how lovely. I wouldn't say comic books should *only* present the negativistic side of things that cannot be depicted presently; there are an awful lot of positive things, too, that we can't show in comic books.

FOOM: Do you find that the production schedules allow for a proper gestation period?

STEVE: Sometimes, yes, and sometimes, no. Sometimes a story will come to you in five minutes, and other times it takes five weeks. In the first case, of course, they allow for it; in the second case, they don't. Sounds like I'm equivocating on every question you ask. (Laughter.)

FOOM: How was Howard the Duck created?

STEVE: As a joke. It was the only sight gag I could think of to top Korrek jumping out of the jar of peanut butter in *FEAR #19*. I told Val to have a duck come waddling out of the bushes. I didn't mention the cigar; the cigar was Val Mayerik's creation. So was Howard's clothing. I just told Val, "Don't make him look too much like Donald, and for God's sake, don't dress him in a sailor suit." Because I included Howard's dialogue for that particular sequence of panels — "Clam up, buddy, you don't know what absurdity is," etc. — I think Val drew the kind of duck who might deliver that line. That's where the cigar came from, and that's where the kind of tacky suit and the rumpled hat came from, and the minute I saw it, without even knowing what the duck's name was (we didn't name him 'til next issue), I knew we had something more on our hands than just, y'know, a four panel gag or something. He was a very real character from the very beginning, and the easiest one of the characters in that whole sequence of bent-out-of-shape-reality stories to write. It was a good indication there was substance there.

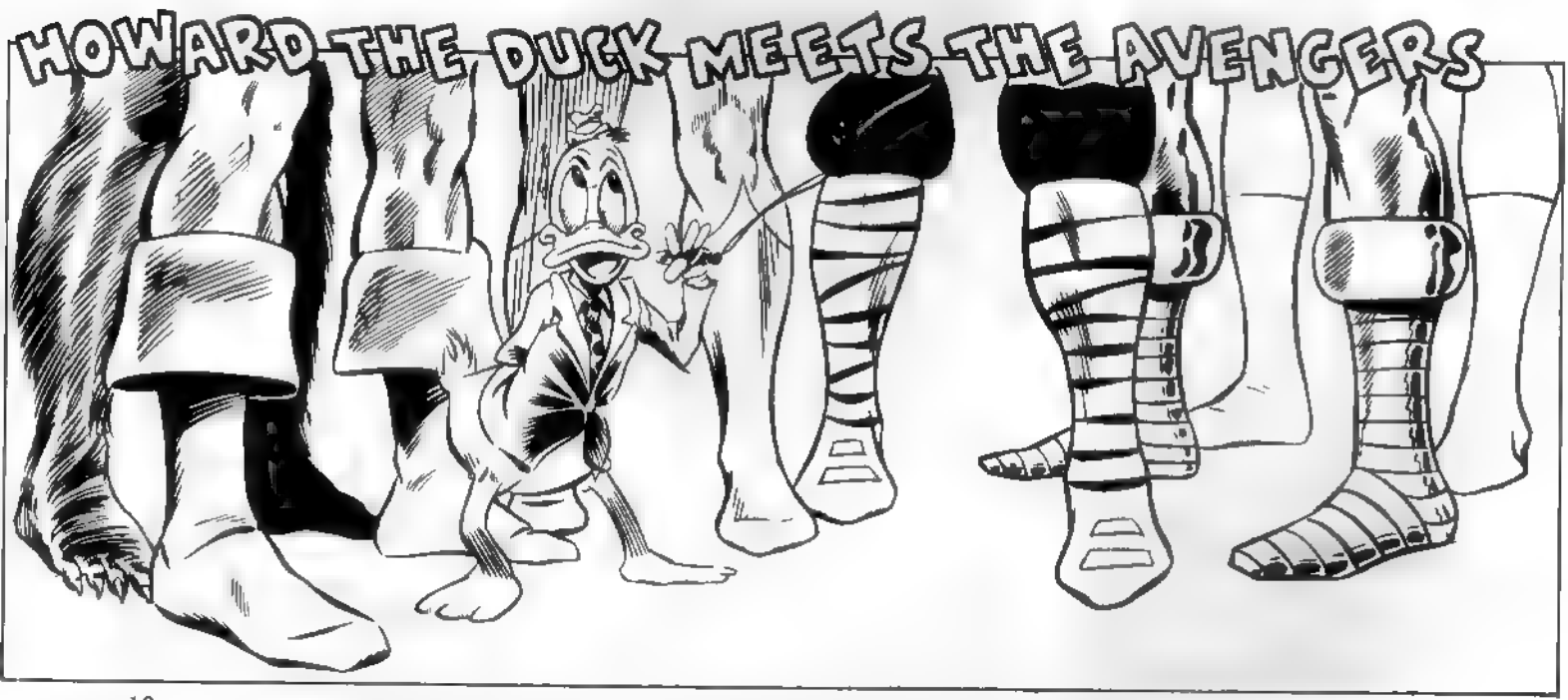
FOOM: Did you abandon Howard at that point, or did you think about him in terms of future stories at all?

STEVE: I was asked to abandon him. They were afraid that the appearance of the duck in the Man-Thing storyline was going to spoil the mood of that book, and so I killed him off about halfway into *MAN-THING #1*. My own feeling was that I wished he could be brought back, but I truly felt he was lost, and I figured the readers would probably not respond to this at all. Everytime you try to do something a little outrageous — or, at least, at *that* time — something outside the normal bounds of Marvel reality, you got letters protesting and saying, "Why are you being silly with our funny books?" (Laughter.) "Don't you know funny books are supposed to be serious!" And this time must have been the exception that proves the rule, y'know. People were taken with him immediately. The office was flooded with letters; there was the one wacko who sent a duck carcass from Canada —

FOOM: Yeah, I remember that.

STEVE: — saying, "Murderers, how dare you kill off this duck?" There was the incident at a San Diego Comics Convention where somebody asked Roy, I believe, who was speaking there, whether Howard would ever be coming back, and the entire auditorium stood up and applauded. Stan was being asked about it everyplace he went on the college circuit. It was decided as a result of those incidents to give Howard another shot in the *GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING* book, as a back-up feature, and the response to that led to his getting his own book.

FOOM: How much of Howard is actu-



First the Defenders, and now — ? (Art by Dancin' Dave Wenzel & Fluffy Duffy Vohland.)

Artistic evolution of a duck: the four faces of Howard.

Val Mayerik & Sal Trapani

Frank Brunner & Steve Leialoha

John Buscema & Leialoha

Gene Colan & Leialoha

ally you?

STEVE. Howard is my conscience It's more like he behaves, generally, the way I would *like* to behave. He's a lot nosier than I am, and a lot more demonstrative, and a lot more sarcastic, usually, than I am. I went through a period like that, I guess, during my college days, but Howard is still like that A lot more caustic

FOOM What's your opinion of the state of comic books today?

STEVE. I think they're atrophying As things are I think kids are changing, and the books aren't changing nearly fast enough to keep pace with them. We're reaching a very limited segment of people — people who are deeply into a kind of fantasy that bears almost no relation to reality — and I don't think most kids are like that any more. I think that has a place in their lives, but if you take a look at the changes in children's literature, jesus, they've outdistanced the comics by light years in terms of the subject matter that they're treating. I'm not sure if, according to the provisions of the code, we're even allowed to do a story about a broken home, or about the effects of divorce on a child, or any of the things that really *matter* in a kid's life. If you mention that to many comic book writers now, they look at you as if you're crazy. "That's terrible, that's heavy stuff, the kids don't want to read about that." Well, that's bull, y'know? They're assuming because a story treats a serious subject it can't be entertaining That assumption indicates to me a too-narrow definition of entertainment, and also (paradoxically, when considered in terms of this medium) a lack of imagination as to how those subjects could be treated. I think there's very little imagination in comics right now.

FOOM: Whose fault do you think that is?

STEVE: I don't think anybody gets off clean on this. The code has a lot to do with it. The fear of the publishers to enact changes in the code or abolish it altogether. The limitations of the writers, most of whom are really not educated in the learning processes of children. And, of course, everybody for that same failure of imagination — for not being able to see how something like that could be accomplished.

FOOM. You keep mentioning children. Do you think the readership consists of children?

STEVE: Primarily, I know it does Children and adolescents. I mean, of course, there are older readers, but there again, I'm afraid a very specific and limited kind of older reader. We tend to attract the same sort of readers who become Trekkies and Satanists. That's a gross over-generalization, but I sometimes worry that very few of our older readers are what could be called — *normal*. By the same token, I don't want to give anybody the misimpression that *I'm* normal I think it's okay to be crazy. I think very few people, really, in 20th Century America aren't *slightly* neurotic, in some fashion or another, and I'm not even sure that the most common neuroses are the best, *ie* that what we consider normal is in any way desirable. But what I'm afraid of is that many of the older readers we attract are not just interestingly out of step, or marching to a different drummer, but stumbling around blindly to no beat at all. I'm not *sure* about that — I know it doesn't apply universally — but I think, in large part, it may be true.

FOOM. Don't you think there's a certain amount of the "youth culture" that crosses over from rock music and movies — media freaks, in general?

STEVE: Yeah, and I think those people probably account for the inapplicability of that general statement, but I don't think those people are going to be with us for long, because the innovations are coming too slow. Most of the people in comic books right now were comic book fans, growing up, and I've always had this theory that certain of these people, to a greater or lesser extent, grew up with minds that could be approved by the Comics Code Authority. They could have that seal stamped on their foreheads. They don't understand any of the more complex or sophisticated forms that came into existence in the 60s. Comic books have stayed in the 50s. since the 50s

FOOM: Exactly what do you *mean* by that?

STEVE: I'm talking about subject matter — *content* — not syle. Stan's method came into effect as a matter of expediency. The whole renaissance in rock

Teen Angel faces off against the fearless fowl in a flight of fantasy by Wenzel & Vohland.

music took place in the 60s, the whole renaissance in film took place in the 60s, there was a whole cultural upheavel. Everything was turned upside down during the decade — except comics, which although they expanded their horizons slightly, mostly because of Stan, pretty much stayed the same in terms of what was acceptable as *subject matter* for comic books. Stan found new ways of treating that old subject matter He could make an alien race a lot more interesting than the Kryptonians, for example, evolve different kinds of culture and just look at things with a much more cosmic perspective than a lot of the earlier writers could But there was this incredible change — the whole "psychedelic" thing, for lack of a better word – going on in the 60s that most of the writers of comic books, I'm afraid, because they were so deeply into comic books, as fans, missed entirely

FOOM. In most other fields, a writer is expected to write from experience, whereas comic book writers.

STEVE: Their primary experience is comics. In fact, that's even true of me to a large extent. What happened was, at about age 15 or 16, I got very fed up with fandom, because I could no longer read the fanzines. They were written in a foreign language, using all sorts of strange abbreviations and truncated forms, and I couldn't tell an LoC from a TBG from an XYZ, after awhile It was a completely other language, y'know, and when they stopped using English and got into that sort of bastardized argot, I just gave up. I've always had a great loyalty to the English language, even though this interview doesn't show it Actually, a couple of things *have* changed in comics. For awhile there, until Gerry was instructed to bring Gwen Stacy back into the *SPIDER-MAN* book, we really had people convinced that unexpected things could happen in the books again — that characters *could* die, that the ending of every story was *not* predictable I think we've since eviscerated that believability again, too; we're right back where we started In terms of predictability, comic books have reached the stage now where you know, say as on *Star Trek* when Kirk took down Sulu, Spock, and two security guards as part of a landing party, who was going to get "offed." (Laughter.) We're really at that point now, and I think some drastic changes have to be made

FOOM. Do you think comics are relevant?

STEVE. No, I don't I use the word relevance in the broadest sense I don't think they have anything to do with people's lives. I'm not even sure that the comics provide a real and necessary escape anymore

FOOM Isn't there a conflict between escapism and relevance?

STEVE. I have never been a big fan of escapist literature, as ridiculous as that sounds The things I liked about the comics, particularly about Stan's comics in the early '60s, was the fact that by comparison to the Mort Weisinger *Superman* comics of the same era, there

was so much reality. It's what changed the whole shape of the comics industry to begin with — the fact that the heroes began to have personalities, they began to have problems, Spider-Man was enmeshed in an on-going financial crisis. When those elements became commonplace, it seemed like the next step should have been to intensify the reality a little bit. But that never happened

FOOM: The readers probably expect me to ask your future plans for Howard

STEVE. I get asked that a lot, particularly at conventions. People really don't understand that I don't have Howard plotted ten issues in advance, and I wouldn't tell anybody what was going to be in those ten issues if I did. I stopped reading *The Comic Reader* when I was a fan, in fact, because I didn't want to know what was happening in the damn books before they came out. Y'know, what's the point of reading them, then? You can just read the synopses, and then put away the books on your shelf, and you don't have to bother with them

Since then, I and several other writers have, I think, wisely refused to give out the endings to any of the stories to TCR They were upset about that at first, I think, but later came to understand why we were doing it. We wanted to put that element of surprise back in it, even for the fans

FOOM. What about *OMEGA*? How far in advance do you have that plotted, since it seems to have more of a master structure?

STEVE: It has a definite direction. It does not have incidents plotted out all the way through issue # 100 or anything like that. We know where it's going; we know where James-Michael is going; we know certain things about which characters are going to be introduced into the strip and what part they're going to play In some ways, it's the most calculated strip I've ever done, and largely that's because of Mary's predisposition toward structure. We know who the teachers are, for instance, that we have introduced into the story. Ruth and Amber were specifically introduced to play off each other in a particular way and create a particular kind of confusion in James-Michael. Richard Rory is going to be coming into the strip — maybe even will be, by the time this interview is published, and he's going to provide the male figure that's been missing from James-Michael's life since his parents were killed. We do know, even though we're probably not going to reveal it for quite awhile, what the relationship between James-Michael and Omega is. So all that stuff actually is "plotted" in that sense. The concepts are all there; exactly how they're going to take shape, I don't know

FOOM: How do you and Mary Skrenes collaborate?

STEVE. It varies. We plot the books together, generally, just bouncing ideas back and forth off each other. Then, after the panel descriptions have been done, which Mary generally does, either she will sketch in suggestions of dialogue, from which I'll work toward the final

version of the dialogue, or sometimes we just split up the pages and she'll do whole pages and I'll do whole pages. Most of the time I write the captions; Mary is responsible for an awful lot of the dialogue. It's an interesting collaboration. It changes on every issue

FOOM: How does your present work differ from things you've done in the past?

STEVE: It's a lot better. Have you ever read my Sub-Mariners? (Laughter) I've gained a certain mastery of the medium since then, y'know. I came into comics, and the first few stories I did — true to the theory of beginner's luck — were not bad, and then by my sixth or seventh story, things really began to get crappy, and stayed that way for about a year while I learned what the hell I was doing. It's been a steady climb ever since then. You can almost date it from the issue Bob Brown took over *DAREDEVIL*. Things have been getting steadily better with occasional, inevitable dips, of course, since then

FOOM: Do you intend to continue in your present mold, or are you con-

About The Artists:

by Roger Stern

GENIAL GENE COLAN

The only problem with Eugene Colan is that he is just *too* damn good as an artist. Look at a job by Colan — any job — and you will find a degree of professionalism, quality, and style that rivals the biggest guns of the comics industry. The verve and atmosphere of his work shines throughout some eighty issues of DAREDEVIL, over fifty issues of TOMB OF DRACULA, and numerous old IRON MAN, SUB-MARINER, and CAPTAIN AMERICA strips that old-time readers still recall with a wistful smile.

But if Colan is such a great artist, why is it that we so rarely hear his name mentioned when award time rolls around?

Because — like we said — the man is simply *too* good.

A typical letter to a magazine like TOMB OF DRACULA will go on and on about a particular issue's story and subplot developments, and then — almost as an afterthought — will add "Gene and Tom (Palmer) did their usual great job." It's that "usual great job" that has paradoxically stolen some of the limelight which Genial Gene so richly deserves. It's just that readers have gotten so used to getting such a fine quality of art from Gene, that their raves of appreciation have become somewhat tempered with an edge of familiarity. But if his public might be a bit recalcitrant at times about praising his art, Colan's colleagues are far from it.

"I don't believe what that man can do," says long-time DRACULA writer, Marv Wolfman. "Gene's a real miracle worker! No kidding, he can draw anything. I sometimes wish we could shoot the art directly from his pencils, because so few inkers can really do him justice."

"Gene's stuff is really fine," agrees artist Allen Milgrom, "but he's really hard to ink. I mean, I've only done a couple of ink jobs over his pencils — some covers — and I was really only satisfied with one of them. Gene tends to work in tones rather than in lines, he's such a good artist, and he puts so much work into his pencils, that it's really tough to do them justice in the inking. An inker really has to work at it. I personally think that some of Gene's best work is the stuff he's done in wash for the black-and white magazines."

The quality of Colan's work is something that John David Warner, editor of Marvel's black-and-white magazines, is fully in agreement with. "I've got this BLADE story on file that Gene did himself — and in wash — that's just beautiful, but it sits in the drawer because I don't have a book to put it in. It's really a shame, too, because Gene's stuff is so hard to ink, and this wash-job really shows the depth of his work. One of the reasons that TOMB OF DRACULA always looks so great is that Tom Palmer is so successful at translating Gene's pencils to inks with the use of zip-a-tone and a fine pen line."

Just what kind of training goes into the making of such an artist? We contacted Gene at his New Jersey studio for the answer.

"Well, my influences were the usual ones: Alex Raymond, Milt Caniff, and Noel Sickles .. and, of course, Hal Foster. But I got most of my practical training thanks to the late Syd Shores. Syd had a studio, and we turned out work for the old Timely/Atlas line."

It was for that precursor of the present-day Marvel Comics line that much of Gene's early work was produced, although he also turned out work for such companies as Fiction House, Ziff-Davis, Ace, National, and Quality. There was even a story for the late EC comics line. And the work Gene did ran the gamut of everything from science fiction to westerns, from war stories to weird monster stories. Yes, and even to humor and romance comics.

"I always enjoyed the romance stories," says Gene. "They were simple stories — and, sure, there was a lot of formula in most of them — but they were fun to do. For the most part, though, I've always liked the adventure strip. Give me something with a little action to it, maybe even with a little bit of the old mystery or supernatural flavor to it .. like DRACULA."

And certainly, it is his work on TOMB OF DRACULA and on DOCTOR STRANGE for which Gene is most widely known. So, with a background that includes both slam-bang acrobatic super-heroes and the Lord of Vampires — with a reputation for turning out art that has at times been described as moody, brooding, and hauntingly realistic — isn't it just the slightest bit odd for Gene Colan to be delineating the adventures of a cigar-chomping duck?

Perhaps.

"Oh, but I love drawing HOWARD!" exclaims Gene, his normally soft voice becoming insistent. "It's really a kind of off-beat comedy adventure, if you get what I mean. There's all the usual action and excitement of a

templating any big changes?

STEVE: Two answers to that. One, I don't contemplate writing comics forever. Two, I don't want my next strip to be another Howard the Duck. If I do create another comic book series, it's going to be something different, probably totally a 180° polar opposite of Howard. The Howard book and the Omega book debuted at about the same time, and I'm glad that one was a serious series and one was a funny series. (I'm not sure which was which, though.) I don't wanna keep doing the same things over and over again. I don't want people to expect the next Howard the Duck from me. I'm trying, really, to stay one step ahead of the office, and just give them what they don't expect each time. People forget that I live with that duck on a day-to-day basis, y'know, and I almost wish he'd go away and let me alone! (Laughter.) It's like, I love him dearly, but I don't want to spend all my time thinking about it. I'm really more interested in The Next Project now than I am in the duck, in a lot of ways.

FOOM. What is your next project? Do

continued

super-hero strip, but with this underlying air of comic relief that's always present."

Or as someone else has said, "I mean, he's a *duck*!"

And as far as Genial Gene Colan is concerned, he's going to keep drawing HTD until they cart him away.

And wouldn't it be something if such a peerless penciler finally got the praise he so richly deserves, thanks to an anthropomorphic fowl?

That would be *too* good to be true.

SURFIN'

STEVE LEIALOHA

Night falls in the San Francisco Bay Area, and the fog settles in over the region like a blanket, as a lone figure bends over his drawing board. Carefully, he applies his ink to a series of penciled pages as the clock ticks on. And, while the so-called normal people toss about in their beds, the tall fellow at the board pauses between brush and pen, allows himself to stretch and yawn once or twice, and then — chuckling a bit, perhaps — returns to his work. It is midnight in San Francisco, and Steve Leialoha is inking the Duck.

So how does a tall, bearded young man of some twenty-four summers wind up inking the adventures of America's most fantastic fowl? After all, it's not the most usual form of employment. One might expect him to be occupied by something more prosaic — like, say, playing bass in a rock band. Well, as a matter of fact, although he *does* play bass in a rock band, Steve Leialoha is also possessed by that special sense of wonder that typifies the strange breed of humanity known as comic book people. And, as is the case with many of us folk, Steve's involvement with the medium stems from an old childhood attachment.

As a matter of record, the art of Steve Leialoha first popped into comics-related print back in the mid-sixties in the pages of a couple of New York-based fanzines, *Super-Adventures* and *Stories of Suspense*. (For those of you interested in the "Isn't it a small world?" school of coincidences, both of those fanzines were produced by Marvelous Marv Wolfman.) After several issues of illustrating the escapades of such characters as "Janah the Space Viking," Steve drifted away from the world of fanzines, although he continued to enjoy comics and polish his art. "My influences in those days were mainly Gil Kane and Carmine Infantino," says Steve, "especially when they were inked by Murphy Anderson. Of course, there have been a lot of other influences since then, but those three were the first big ones."

After that early splash in the fanzines, the name of Leialoha was not to be heard of again in connection with comics for nearly a decade — not until the mid-seventies. It was then that the loose grouping of people known as the Marvel Bullpen West came into being. In actuality, Marvel West was just an odd conglomeration of writers, artists, letterers, and other such types who had grown tired of the Big Apple and packed it all off to the somewhat calmer climes of the Bay Area. Of that group, it was Alan Weiss who first encountered Leialoha.

"I had heard about all of these comic book people moving into the area," Steve explains, "and then one day I ran into Al and showed him some of the samples I was working up. He liked 'em, and he told me that I ought to go up and see Jim Starlin."

Starlin, as it happened, was in the market for a good, California-based inker to help in the production of his WARLOCK book. "It's funny! Two strips I'd always wanted to work on were WARLOCK and DOCTOR STRANGE, and there I was, working with Jim on WARLOCK!"

One thing led to another, and when the first issue of HOWARD THE DUCK came out, it was Steve Leialoha who was holding down the honors as embellisher. So what's it like to put the finishing touches on the far-flung adventures of a misplaced duck? "Oh, it has its moments," says Steve. "I really enjoy working with Gene Colan. I've heard other people say that he's a hard artist to ink, but I find his stuff pretty easy, myself. I guess it's all a matter of your point-of-view. His pencils have a lot of gray tones, as opposed to bold line-work, and I like that. As an inker, it gives me a lot of leeway in what I do, and I don't feel so restricted in adding my own touches to it."

As for the future? Well, Steve has some new works planned for Mike Friedrich's STAR*REACH magazine and, of course, there's always music and the band — but what about Leialoha at Marvel?

"Well, it looks like I'll be working with Gene and Marv soon on DOCTOR STRANGE. And ... well, I've always wanted to ink some of Gil Kane's pencils. Now that I'm working for Marvel, I'd like to do that ... even if it's just a cover."

Meanwhile, there's the Duck ... and the fog. And the normal people have no idea just what they're missing!

you plan to diversity in your writing, moving into other fields?

STEVE: I already am, yeah. You know about the book I'm trying to put together on comics. There's a novel I want to write about the comic book business. A collection of short stories I'm working on. I'd like to get back to film, radio and some of the other things. There's the project that Mary, Jim Salicrup and I are working on, *Dione Belmont*. There's another really silly project that I have in mind for anybody who wants it, called *Meatball*. I'm setting up my own production company, although I don't exactly know what Steve Gerber Productions is going to be, yet. We produced the Duck button. I'm thinking about doing an underground.

FOOM: How will your underground work differ from your overground?

STEVE: I was going to say the plots might be more complex, but I'm not really sure about that when I remember that ten-issue *DEFENDERS* "bozos" epic. I don't know if they could get much more complicated than that. The pacing of the stories would probably differ a lot, because I wouldn't have to have a fight scene every three pages. I think there would be a certain freedom of language that you don't have in the code-approved comics, or even in the black-and-whites, and I think that's primarily where it would differ — in the subject matter, the pacing, and the language — because I don't have most of the complaints with the Establishment comics that most of the other underground artists do. It's like, I've found very little of real entertainment value in most of the undergrounds; they tend to be as repetitive in their own way as the overground comics do in theirs. I refuse to say anything about ground level comics. (Laughter.)

FOOM: So, tell me, Steve — what do you do in your spare time?

STEVE: My what? (Laughter.) There's no such thing

Marvel Department

Compiled by Reliable Ralph Macchio

It's a time of unprecedented upheaval here at mighty Marvel, with the establishment of a new system of individual editors—*Conway, Kirby, Thomas, Warner, Wein* and *Wolfman*—under the aegis of executive editor, *Archie Goodwin*; but, through it all, the spirit of innovation which has stamped this Bullpen as the most dynamic in comics history endures amidst the turbulence, thanks to the loyal legions of Marvel madmen everywhere. It's to you folks, who are ever ready to participate in the explosive Marvel experience, that we really owe a sincere salute. *Excelsior!* And now, let's take a sneak peak at what's coming up in the most marvelous group of comic magazine titles in history—specially organized here according to editor . . .

GERRY CONWAY

[Editor/Writer: AVENGERS - CAPTAIN MARVEL - DAREDEVIL - DEFENDERS - GHOST RIDER - IRON MAN - LOGAN'S RUN - MS. MARVEL - SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN.]

One of Marvel's most talented and prolific scripters has returned to the fold! We're speaking of none other than Gallopin' *Gerry Conway*, who's back with a plethora of new ideas and directions that'll knock ya from here to Yancy Street. First on the list is our fearless new female sensation—MS. MARVEL—written by Gerry and drawn by *John Buscema* and *Joe Sinnott*, to begin on a monthly basis, with the pandemonius first issue due to premiere soon. Ms. Marvel is none other than Linda Danvers of CAPTAIN MARVEL fame, who'll be entering the ranks of super-doers in a most unique manner that you must not miss—believe us! The fantastic first ish features the menace of the *Scorpion*, which signals a storyline dominated by that awesome organization of mechanized menace: A.I.M.! And watch out for a new villainess named *The Fox*. Gerry summed up his concept of Ms. Marvel most succinctly: "My idea is that there should be a female super-hero and she should be just as cool, together, and powerful—and, of course, as much her own person—as any male super-hero." All the members of the supporting cast have not been finalized yet, but we can tell you to be looking for a certain hip-talkin' redhead from a certain amazing Spider-Man's book—*Mary Jane Watson!* Ms. Marvel will also be popping up in the AVENGERS, the DEFENDERS—or both.

Merry Gerry

Using that last line as a convenient seque device, let's talk about Gerry's plans with regard to those aforementioned super-groups—

A number of people will be making comebacks in the power-packed pages of the AVENGERS,

An early character sketch
of MS. MARVEL
by Jazzy Johnny Romita,
art director extraordinaire.

# of inFOOMation

and certainly not the least of these is *Wonder Man!* Gerry plans on making him a major character in the book for several months, in effect creating a strange romantic triangle among Wonder Man, the Vision, and the Scarlet Witch. It will be a chance for a re-evaluation of the Vision/Scarlet Witch relationship or, as Gerry puts it: "The Vision will go through a whole soul-searching thing. In effect his mind will be completely blown." The *Mighty Thor* will also be returning to the Avengers, under equally as mysterious circumstances as he left. the *Black Knight* will be back for a single issue, and the majestic Prince of Wakanda—the *Black Panther*—is also slated to make his reappearance. On the villainous side of the coin, both *Doctor Doom* and the savage *Sub-Mariner* are scheduled for a suspenseful mind-blowing encounter with Earth's Mightiest Heroes. Finally, one of the *Ultimate Ultron*, is making a cataclysmic comeback.

Gerry has some equally mind-numbling revelations about his coming tenure on Marvel's most misanthropic melange of characters, the DEFENDERS. There will be a crisis of purpose in the group, with Dr. Strange, Hulk and Valkyrie deciding they've had it with the group idea. Thus Strange, one of the original founding fathers, dissolves the Defenders completely. Nighthawk will consequently declare the formation of his *own* group. If we said more, you wouldn't believe us. Because of the break-up, several new people will be coming in, including sometimes-Defender *Luke Cage* and the homeless *Hellcat*—even *Captain Marvel* himself will be appearing, at some point. On the kinds of foes the Defenders will be fighting in the far-flung future, Gerry gave us this hint: "I'll probably be creating some new villains of my own, and many of 'em will be group menaces." Gerry's general direction for the forthcoming story cycle is: "A re-affirmation of the kind of comic-book story I like. They'll be fun stories, with a point to them, though not necessarily a depressing one."

Gorgeous George

Gerry has also assumed creative control of the Armored Avenger's book, IRON MAN. First off, Iron Man's old armor will be brought back, to reside once again in its cozy briefcase, when not encasing Tony Stark. This will lead to complications when someone finds the briefcase and begins to piece together the connection between Stark and his bodyguard, Iron Man. A major subplot will feature an unseen enemy attempting to break Tony Stark on the corporate as well as the personal level. And our bashful millionaire will be coming under the scrutiny of the U.S. Senate for possible bribery charges. With all these problems contributing to his anxiety, it's small wonder Stark's unhealthy heart will trouble him again. Several old villains are rampaging toward rematches, including *Ultimo*, the *Guardsman*, and *Firebrand*. Why, even the malevolent *Mandarin* may return, but as Gerry puts it: "If I bring him back, it will be as a Fu Manchu type of authority. He will not actually fight Iron Man; he will be a figure behind the scenes." Gerry also had some comments on the amorous exploits of ladies' man, Tony: "Stark's romantic life will shift into high gear. Chrisse Longfellow, Stark's new secretary, will become a really heavy romantic interest." As for the happy hundreth anniversary issue of the INVINCIBLE IRON MAN, a startling revelation therein will cause a complete turnabout in Tony Stark's life. Oh, by the way, somewhere in this whole magilla—the return of *Jasper Sitwell!*

GHOST RIDER is another new acquisition of Kid Conway, about which he says: "I've decided it's ridiculous that everyone in Los Angeles knows Johnny Blaze is the Ghost Rider." And wouldja believe that part of Gerry's solution to the problem is to casually let us know that the aforementioned Mr. Blaze isn't the Ghost Rider after all?!! A new villain will appear, called the *Enforcer*. And the Johnny Blaze/Roxanne Simpson/Karen Page triangle will be intensified and finally resolved.

Yet another of Conway's captures is CAPTAIN MARVEL, which will shift focus to Earth, among other changes. Gerry says: "*Al Milgrom* and I are beginning a long sub-plot to explain why the Kree have been acting so oddly for the past five years. They've been infected by human beings with a virus of the spirit called emotion." While you ponder the metaphysical ramifications of that little morsel, consider that Gerry also plans to return *Rick Jones* to the Negative Zone and bring in some new villains in the future, among whom is—the *Jaguar*. As for old baddies, *Ronan* and the *Sentry* will also be around to make trouble.

With marvelous *Marv Wolfman* working on several projects (so secret even *we* can't reveal them!), Gerry is also resuming responsibility for the writing of everybody's favorite Man Without Fear, DAREDEVIL. The relationship between Matt Murdock

and Heather will continue to evolve and *Debbie Harris*—Foggy Nelson's fiancee—will at last be found. Matt will undergo a personal crisis as he is torn between his storefront law work and his own private law practice. Away from the personal side of things, the Ox, (remember him?) will be back, and so will the murderous *Man-Bull*.

Perhaps most important of all, there's a *new* Spider-Man book in the works—PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN. Certain aspects of Pete's life will be showcased here, as opposed to those taking precedence in his other color comics exploits. In this book, the Peter Parker/Flash Thompson relationship will grow, and there'll be a more in-depth look at Aunt May's life, as well. Pete's experiences at college and his apartment life will be covered in more depth than ever before, and the nemesis aspects of this new title should prove exciting, indeed, for as Gerry says: "Basically, I'm going to be trying to *create* villains for this book, and if I do use old ones, they'll be those I've created in the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN in the past. I'll be introducing a mastermind villain who'll have been behind some machinizations that involve Peter Parker." Also, the utmost care will be taken to ensure that continuity will continue, and the stories will interweave with the other Spider-Man titles. The champion choice for permanent artist on the strip is—who else?—Marvel's sultan of speed, Our Pal *Sal Buscema*, inked by Mighty *Mike Esposito*.

Our Pal Sal

Marvel is currently involved in adapting a number of far-out films into the comics medium, and Gerry has managed to snare one for himself. LOGAN'S RUN is the title of a new monthly book, to be drawn by Gorgeous *George Perez*. The original screenplay will be adapted in the first four or five issues; then, Logan will go off with Jessica and the Old Man to other Domes, each of which will have acclaimed to the future world in a dramatically different manner. The combination of Gallopin' Gerry's prose and Pacesetter Perez's power-packed pencils promises LOGAN'S RUN will be science fiction with a punch. Check it out!

And now, in case you're convinced at this point that Gerry is the *only* writer currently in the Bullpen, let's move on to—

ARCHIE GOODWIN

[Editor: CHAMPIONS - HOWARD THE DUCK - INHUMANS - IRON FIST - MARVEL SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP - WEREWOLF - X-MEN.]

Artful Archie

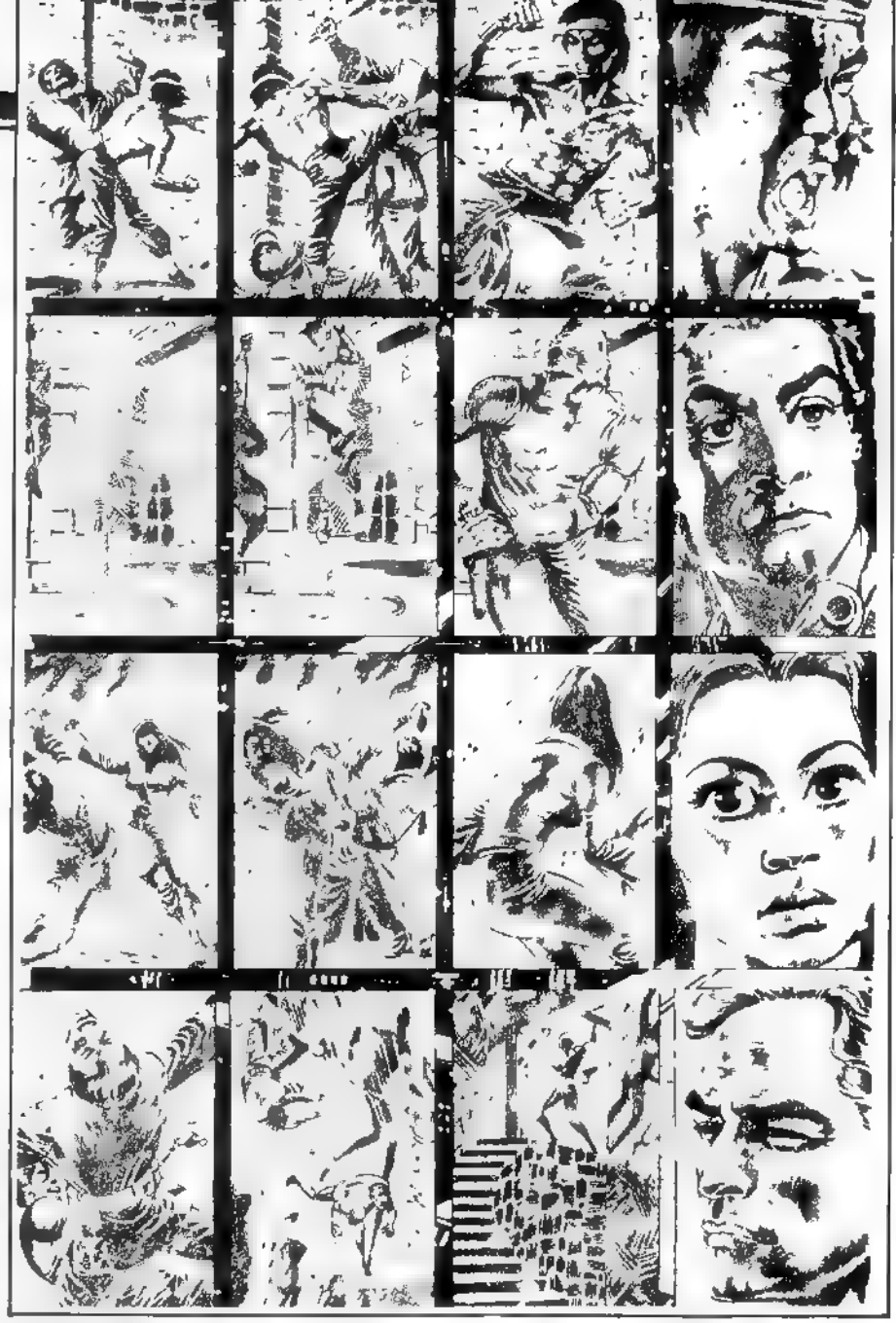
Cheerful *Chris Claremont* plans to keep IRON FIST alternating nicely between martial-arts villains and super-powered opponents. After having it out with a vicious Bronx street gang, the *Wrecking Crew*—who originated in the DEFENDERS—will become foes of Iron Fist, with some very special guest appearances throughout that story. Some old villains will be reintroduced, and in #11 there'll be hints dropped as to the identity of an old HULK villain, who'll soon be reappearing to challenge The Living Weapon. Upcoming in #15 is a special Iron Fist/X-Men team-up and there'll also be a three-part tale involving the mysterious man with the scar on his face, who's been sneaking around in the background since the very first issue. On the undefined extent of the incredible power of Danny Rand's iron fist, Chris says: "The power of Iron Fist is the supreme expression of the ultimate force of will. It can be an explosive force, as is so often shown or, on extremely rare occasions, it can be a healing force. But I will probably never have Danny use it again to perform a mind meld, as he did in issue six." *John Byrne* remains permanent artist on the strip.

The new X-MEN is shifting into high gear, with Chris and artist *Dave Cockrum* making it one of the most carefully-thought-out group books on the stands. Chris and Dave have done their bombastic best to return the *Juggernaut* to his original conception as the one foe who simply *can't* be stopped. One of the X-Men will leave, to make room for *Phoenix*, the new incarnation of Jean Grey. Just who will be leaving must remain a mystery, to be revealed in the next few issues. Issue #104 is of major importance, for the running subplot dealing with Professor Xavier's strange dreams will move toward resolution, with *Eric the Red* somehow tying in with all this. The entire thing will explode in a

Cheerful Chris

climactic three-part story with guest stars galore. Afterward, there's a tentative *Firelord* story in the works. The X-Men will also be popping up in various other Marvel mags—both singly and as a group—to let those who may be unaware know that these are indeed the *new* X-Men. Perhaps the biggest news is that the greatest X-Men villain of all—*Magneto*—will be returning! About the character, Chris comments: "When we bring Magneto back, he won't be the same Magneto who's been humiliated by Daredevil, the Avengers, and everyone else and his twin brother. When he's restored to maturity, he will be at the *peak* of his powers. We'll be revealing a number of new abilities and strengths he never had. He'll be the Magneto he was in the first few issues of X-MEN."

The unqualified smash hit of the season is a "fowl"—that's HOWARD THE DUCK, of course, which the bizarre mind of *Steve (Baby) Gerber* will be taking down satirical roads never travelled before. Issue #'s 7, 8 and 9 will feature the Duck at his feathery, feisty best in a story of political tomfoolery which begins with Howard's nomination by the *"All-Night Party,"* becomes a very personal campaign log, and culminates with the mind-blowing aftermath of the campaign. Beyond that, Steve's not saying. One thing he is talking about, is the HOWARD THE DUCK TREASURY—featuring several of the most eagerly-requested Howard sagas from the past, which many unfortunate Marvelites missed the first time out. In addition, there'll be an all-new 27-page story guest-starring the redoubtable *Defenders*, who've been known for their weird membership policies before, but this time have really outdone themselves. Howard and his defending-friends will be going up against the dastardly menaces of *Black Hole, Tilly the Hun, the Human Bullseye, the Spanker*, and their devilish leader—*Dr. Angst*. And you thought the *Head Men* were the last word in evil super groups! There'll also be some invaluable information on the rapidly snow-balling *Howard for President* campaign soon destined to have the entire country deleriously Duck conscious. And, speaking of that little project, Steve Baby says to remind ya that there'll soon be a spiffy campaign portrait available to one-and-all—suitable for framing,



A page by Gulacy from MASTER OF KUNG FU # 48

Delightful Dave

Madman Mooney

natch—most probably by regular HTD artist Genial *Gene Colan!* There are a number of enthusiastic comic book emporiums across the country which will be serving as local campaign headquarters, so search 'em out, people—and would ya believe Howard already received three titanic votes in the awesome Oregon Primary?! If this keeps up, we just may elect ourselves a lame duck president for the first time in history. *Yeesh!*

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY is primed to blast apart the boundaries of comicbook sci-fi in coming months. The uncanny origin of the most mysterious being in the cosmos—*Starhawk*—will be unravelled in the next few issues, following the conclusion of the *Topographical Man* stories. Starhawk's relationship to his wife, Alita, and the strange planetoid he inhabited will take you completely by surprise—so swears Steve—and amidst it all lurks the threat of another interstellar conflict. Concurrently, the Guardians will become involved with the barbarians of Arcturus, and if that last name sounds a bit familiar to you, it's probably because you're remembering the late Morbius series in ADVENTURES INTO FEAR—which took that tragic vampire to Arcturus in a superior story scripted by...who else?...Steve Gerber. The relationship between young Nikki and her Guardian caretakers will crystallize over the next few issues, space fans, as will the personalities of each of the Guardians.

OMEGA THE UNKNOWN has done quite well on the stands, thus allowing Steve to begin thinking in long-range terms about the book's future. A new villain, called the *Wrench*, will appear to complicate the evolution of James-Michael Starling in his new 9th Avenue environment. *Richard Rory* will be entering the strip, and we'll finally learn the wog-boggling origin of Omega himself. Among other upcoming events, Omega will be making his first visit to a bar, and James-Michael will take his first walk at night, alone in New York City. And if those sound a bit prosaic to you, then you haven't been reckoning with unpredictable Steve's schizoid subplot syndrome. (Whew—wotta mouthful!)

Peerless Paul

Boisterous *Bill Mantlo* has a habit of inheriting books with the most seemingly unworkable premises, and then doing the unexpected with them and turning them into successes. Keeping in line with this, Bill has taken over scripting SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, about which he says: "I will start a new format for this book, with Doctor Doom being the main focus of the storylines; Sub-Mariner's exploits may be a continuing and important subplot, with the respective adversaries of each character interchanging to fight the other character." The *Shroud* will be around for awhile, and Bill is thinking of augmenting his previously-revealed origin. Somewhere within the next several issues, the Sub-Mariner's undersea race will awaken from their comatose state in Atlantis, and Namor will become king there once again. Also, coming up shortly, the *Red Skull* is slated to appear and so is *Captain America*, for at least two issues. Concurrently, Bill plans to return Doctor Doom to the original *Stan Lee* conception of a brilliant-if-somewhat-insane monarch. Newcomer *Bob Hall* is the scheduled artist on the book, and he's certainly someone to watch in upcoming months.

Another group book which the Boisterous One has just added to his permanent scripting schedule is the CHAMPIONS. With the wind-up of the Crimson Dynamo/Titanium Man affair, the mysterious *Darkstar* will be playing a major role, beginning with her rescuing of the Champions. *Black Goliath* will also be appearing as a research consultant and super-hero. Tying in with this will be the return of the *Stranger* as he continues to hunt for that bizarre box which eluded him in Black Goliath's own now-defunct mag. This may eventually tie in with a story Bill is plotting for MARVEL TEAM-UP. About the champions' membership, Bill says: "I'm not sure if I'll ever alternate members, but I may open it up like the Avengers, with a rotating roster." *John Byrne* of IRON FIST artistic acclaim will be taking over the pencils with #11, in which the Champions will go against *Warlord Kaa* from an early issue of the HULK.

Bill also has some big plans for his other book, MARVEL TEAM-UP. General John Byrne has emergency-illustrated a several part Spider-Man/Hulk/Woodgod meeting, which grows out of the GIANT-SIZE TEAM-UP annual featuring the X-Men. From there, Spidey is on his way into space for a cosmic adventure with *Warlock*, battling the aforementioned Stranger. Beyond that point, *Daredevil* may guest-star. *Jean De Wolff*, the female police captain introduced in #48, may become a continuing supporting character.

Sad news for MASTER OF KUNG FU fans, as Peerless *Paul Gulacy* leaves the series to which he has contributed so much; Paul will

Boisterous Bill

be remaining for the conclusion of the current six-part *magnum opus* detailing Shang-Chi's ultimate confrontation with *Fu Manchu*. By the end of this sensational sequence, Shang-Chi will have undergone a transformation of character that will leave him with a much more aggressive personality, though he will still retain his moral scruples. Doug plans a possible upheavel in the *Nayland Smith* organization, with Shang-Chi leading the way, if it occurs. With the departure of Paul Gulacy, Doug may be moving away from the *James Bond*/spy genre, a movement he describes this way: "The major reason the strip moved into the whole secret agent thing was to allow for greater latitude in plotting. When I took over writing the book, Shang-Chi was a passive figure who would only react if events were forced upon him, and this was a very narrow framework in which to write, because there are only so many Si-Fan assassins that can be sent against one character without it becoming monotonous. I had to subtly evolve the character so that he would initiate events and move forward of his own volition. Once this was accomplished, the secret agent shtick seemed a direction which would allow for plenty of kung fu action without being stereotypical." With a more drastic change in Shang-Chi's character hovering on the horizon, it's likely a new accompanying direction will be sought for the series.

The INHUMANS will be returning to Earth after their several-issue sojourn into space, to participate in the Kree *War of Three Galaxies* from a terrestrial vantage point. Extraordinary characters will ironically be caught in very ordinary situations, and several new Inhumans will be introduced as the series progresses. "I may look through early appearances of the Inhumans in various books, simply selecting the more interesting-looking ones from the background and fleshing them out by giving them names and powers." Upcoming plotlines will probably feature a number of old Marvel villains. Kibitzin' *Keith Pollard*—pencils and inks—is the new, "permanent" artist on the series.

Kavortin' Keith

There is a Big Change ahead for WEREWOLF BY NIGHT. Jack Russell will be able to control his fearsome transformation on every night except that of the full moon, when its influence may be too powerful. All the rest of the evenings, he will use his transformation as a psychological weapon against evil-doers. This, according to Doug: "...will help avoid the two basic pitfalls of past plotlines, which were of necessity burdened by either having Jack Russell being hunted, or else just running into the villain by coincidence." The relationship between Jack and Topaz will become more intense in many ways, and a new villain will appear from Buck Cowan's past. It will also finally be explained why Cowan spends so much time with Jack Russell. Deranged *Don Perlin* stays on as artist-by-night.

The mighty Marvel color department has a number of surprises coming up for you rabid readers with a brand-new series of mini-stories, to be appearing intermittently in various books as an extra added treat. In the months to come, be expecting any number of these short spectaculars to be wingin' your way—so watch for 'em. Upcoming tales include: *Hawkeye & The Two-Gun Kid* by Sparkling *Scott Edelman* and Kinky *Klaus Janson*; *Midnight* by *Roger* (Sterno) *Stern* and *Jeff Aclin; Nick Fury* by Sparkling Scott and *Juan Ortiz; Rich Jones* by Scott again and *Mark Rice; Sunfire* by Sterno and *Dave Wenzel*; *Clea* by *Naomi Basner* and *Sandy Plunkett;* and *Spider-Man* by Scott Edelman and (how about this for a treat) *John Romita, Junior!*

JACK KIRBY

[Editor/Writer/Artist: CAPTAIN AMERICA - BLACK PANTHER - ETERNALS - 2001.]

CAPTAIN AMERICA will continue to be taken in diverse directions by the man who co-created him over thirty years ago. With the wind-up of the weird *Night People* and *Agron* stories, Jack will be placing Cap in a jungle environment for a spell, where the star-spangled sentinel will be running across his newest foe—the *Swine*. The story is about a man who breaks other men mentally, until he faces someone his tactics fail on—and if you can't guess who that is, go to the back of the class! For those conjecturing about the supporting cast for this book, now that the Bicentennial Madbomb saga has been finished, Jack has a number of comments: "Steve Rogers and Sharon Carter are at an estranged point in their relationship, and it will probably remain that way for some time, because there's a new girl coming into Cap's life who will make it *very* interesting. I'm also planning something big with the Falcon, which will allow him to really blossom as an individual. And there

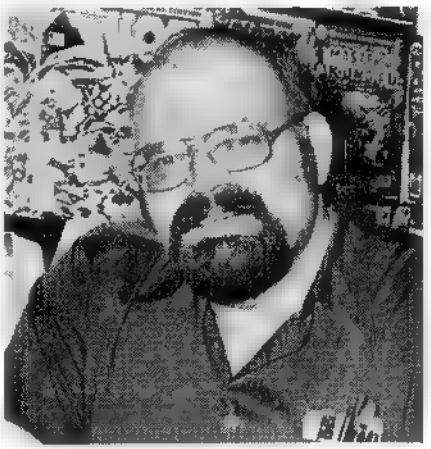
will be a major super-villain appearing soon who will display extraordinary qualities. Although I could bring back the older villains, I feel it's incumbent on me as a writer to constantly do something new and different, which is why I introduce so many new characters."

THE BLACK PANTHER will be receiving his own magazine and a totally new look courtesy of King Kirby. Upon completion of the *Ku Klux Klan* story currently running, the Panther will become involved with a vicious group of collectors who will stop at nothing to acquire King Solomon's *frog*. All we can say is, an ordinary frog it *ain't*. A number of

King Kirby

new members will be added to the cast, including *Mr. Little*, *Princess Zanda*, and the offbeat sensation of the year—the *Six Million Year Man*, who you are just not going to believe! Jack's own views on the Panther are: "In the course of a year or so, the old supporting characters who've been in the strip may return, but for the time being the old character have had their turn on the stage, and now it's time for the Panther to be involved with some new people. I also felt I should return the kind of jungle atmosphere to the strip which had recently been absent."

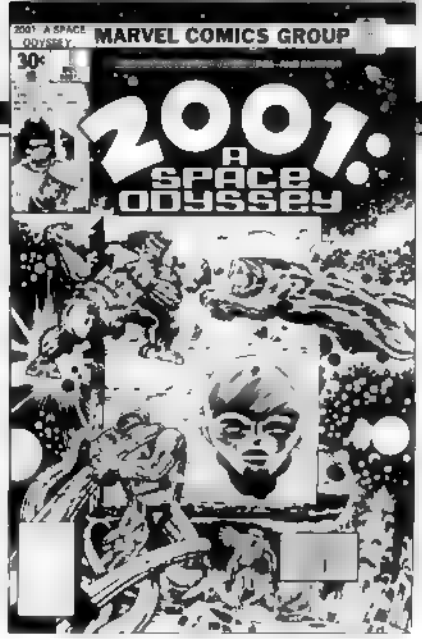
Jack's latest acquisition is a monthly title based on the concepts in both the 2001 movie and book by *Stanley Kubrick* and *Arthur C. Clarke*, which follows closely on the heels of Jack's mammoth adaptation of the film in a MARVEL TREASURY SPECIAL. Smilin' *Stan* and the Bullpen gang were so



Jumbo John

turned on by that energy-packed effort, they just couldn't resist giving the king his creative head to see where he'd take the concept. Jack is developing new characters and ideas as only he can. Accordingly: "Various characters will be in it, some continuing, but the strip will retain the original conception of the Monolith and the idea of Man being transformed into something different through it." This book will definitely be a forum for some of the most startling new Kirby characters of all, so don't miss it!

Perhaps the one title we're all the most excited about is Jack's new "gods" book—the ever-lovin' ETERNALS. You've already read the first several issues, so you know what we're talking about! Issue #7 will reveal the purpose of the *Fourth Host* on Earth and their ultimate mission here. There'll be hordes of new characters appearing, with Deviants and Eternals popping up from all over the world. One character, in particular, who Jack warns us to watch for is the *Reject*, "the wildest Deviant you've ever seen." Ikaris will continue to be the major focus of the book, even though



he will not be prominently featured in each and every issue, because there are a stunning number of new characters and creations who deserve focus, as well. About the Celestial Fourth Host, Jack says: "I'm as much in awe of these gods as the next guy, and I treat them in that manner. The Celestials will remain with us, for they are the counterpoint to everything we do; whatever we do in the next fifty years will be done in their shadow." The relationship between the Deviant *Kro* and the Eternal *Thena* will move in a strange direction; the young *Sprite* will be introduced, and in #10 watch for—*Mother!*

Royal Royer

ROY THOMAS

[Editor/Writer: CONAN - FANTASTIC FOUR - INVADERS - LIBERTY LEGION - RED SONJA - KULL - SAVAGE SWORD - STAR WARS - UNKNOWN WORLDS - WHAT IF...?]

That venerable catalyst of the Marvel Age, the FANTASTIC FOUR, will be taken in some startling new directions by Rascally *Roy Thomas*. The Frightful Four, evil counterpart to the F.F., will be returning to sponsor auditions for a new member. Their final selection is the very *last* person on Earth you'd expect them to choose—the last person on *Counter-Earth*, that is, Ben Grimm will become the Thing once again, and the fading elasticity of Mr. Fantastic is something to be paid attention. The *Impossible Man* will remain for awhile, and a certain Golden Gorilla named *Zorr* may turn up as the F.F.'s butler! A number of new people will bounce in and out, making quite an impact on the lives of everybody's favorite quartet.

Rascally Roy

George (Pacesetter) *Perez* will stay on as permanent artist on the World's Greatest Comic Magazine, with Jovial *Joe Sinnott*, of course, as permanent inker.

Union Jack will be leaving the INVADERS, only to be replaced by *Spitfire*—who is none other than Union Jack's own daughter, Jaqueline. The Invaders will be returning to war-torn Europe to face a gargantuan golem-like monster, as well as the terrible threat of the revived *Master Man* and his mate—*Warrior Woman*! Roy'll also be writing a story about a comic-book scripter named *Captain Biljo*, who masterminds a strip called "Major Victory" and then is captured by the Nazis. Roy intends to keep all the continuity in order, so that the gears of the ever-expanding Marvel Universe continually mesh smoothly. Fearless *Frank Robbins* will continue as peerless penciler.

Keep your eyes open for the LIBERTY LEGION, soon to be a new book from Roy and Dashin' *Don Heck*, that will debut after another two-part Legion adventure in MARVEL SPOTLIGHT. The oldies but goodies just keep rockin' on!

There will be an upcoming two-parter in CONAN THE BARBARIAN which will involve the Cimmerian and Belit in the dangers of another island civilization. A long epic is scheduled to follow, centering on ancient Stygia. Belit will remain the savage barbarian's constant companion for at least the next year-and-a-half, until her early death. Says Roy: "Belit is not a *likable* character, nor was she intended to be. I've been forced to change her a bit from what she was in the Howard stories, to make her a bit more appealing to readers."

Pacesetter Perez

Deparment of inFOOMation

RED SONJA, that other female barbarian-ess, is doing quite nicely in her own book with Roy now handling scripting chores. Upcoming stories will be mainly single-issue episodes, one involving a strange love affair between Sonja and a *unicorn*, while another is a special tale entitled "Demon in the Maze," based on the dream experience of a friend of Roy's. Over all, the Rascally One plans to: "...tie in Sonja more closely with the same kind of style I'm using in CONAN, to help push things along." Fantastic *Frank Thorne* will continue lending his legendary artistic abilities.

Bashful Barry

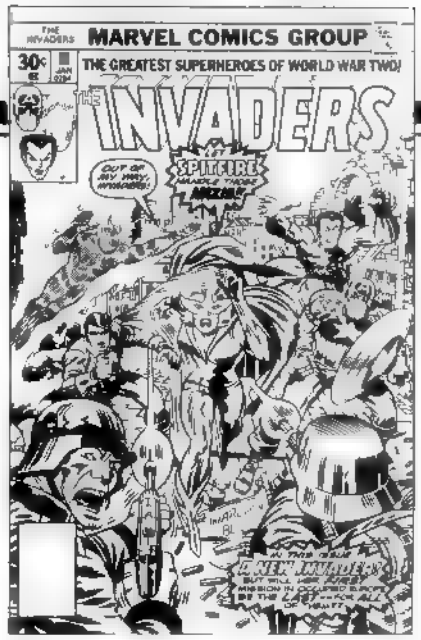
Several issues of MARVEL PREMIERE will feature a new Thomas creation, called the *3-D Man*, which is set in the 1958-59 Marvel Universe. "All the paraphernalia of the 50s will be there, like rock and roll, the flying saucer craze, and so forth. It's a weird book," says Roy. The concept centers on a youth who possesses a certain pair of 3-D glasses that dynamically increase a number of his abilities. The villains will be Marvel's own intergalactic baddies, the *Skrulls*

Another tentative new title is STAR WARS, which Roy the Boy will be handling with Howlin' *Howie Chaykin*, and which should see release sometime in February. It will be a six-part monthly series, adapting the movie of the same name (due to premiere next Easter), and it will coincide with the release of paperback STAR WARS books. Roy is working closely with writer/director *George Lucas* to coordinate the project, which he feels could turn into "something very big, if all works out correctly." Once the movie has been adapted into comics form, Roy will script original stories for the title. Remember—that's STAR WARS, in February 1977.

Yet *another* new series by Roy will be titled WHAT IF?—and if that isn't fairly self-explanatory, Roy relates the concept this way: "The stories in this book will *not* be imaginary tales in the strict sense of the word—that is, that they haven't happened. Everything in this book has or will have happened. However, whatever occurs takes place in a parallel universe, in which things happen a little differently from ours, which in turn sets all the dominoes falling to cause weird permutations that I'll be getting into." The first issue features Spider-Man actually joining the Fantastic Four—and the consequences for them both. The pencils are by ex-Atlas artist, *Jim Craig*. Some examples of what's planned: The *Hulk* with Bruce Banner's brain, *Conan* in a modern-day setting, and a Fantastic Four story in which each member gets four different powers.

UNKNOWN WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION will be returning as a special $1.25 one-shot, containing 70 to 80 pages of the very best in graphic unknown worlds, also including several articles and an interview with noted science-fiction author, *Theodore Sturgeon*. Scheduled artists include such classy illustrators as *Alex Nino* and *Vicente Alcazar*. If sales are good enough, UNKNOWN WORLDS could return as a regularly-published magazine. And believe us, frantic ones, if this ain't worth the price, we don't know what is!

Conan, meanwhile, continues to do extremely well in his black-and-white fullsize mag. SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, which will soon feature a three-part adaptation of *Robert E. Howard's* story "People



oif the Black Circle" by *John Buscema* and *Alfredo Alcala* on art, with Roy on script, of course. Also, a two-part adaptation of Howard's story featuring Bran Mak Morn will soon begin, by Bashful *Barry Smith* and newcomer Timid *Tim Conrad*. And the *Hyborian Age* series, by Roy and *Walt Simonson*, will continue adapting Howard's comprehensive essay on pre-history as seen through his somber eyes.

KULL THE DESTROYER is back in his own title, as you know by now, and Doug is toying with several possible avenues of approach: "It's been suggested that I have Kull go to the mainland, get into outlaw gangs, and eventually fight his way up to the throne again and kill the reigning king, *Thulsa Doom*, in the process. But I would like to do this in manner much differently than was accomplished the first time around, or else I won't attempt it. I don't intend to duplicate already existing plots." Doug also intends to delve more deeply into the civilization of Atlantis to discover what's behind its super-scientific structure. He and Energetic *Ed Hannigan* will continue to concentrate more heavily on the sorcery and sheer weirdness inherent in Kull's world. Ed and *Alfredo Al-Kull-a* are the amiable art team.

JOHN WARNER

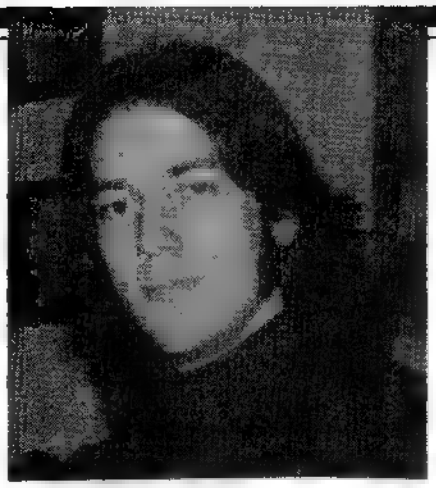
[Editor: DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU-DOC SAVAGE-MARVEL PREVIEW-PLANET OF THE APES-RAMPAGING HULK.]

When we said it was a time of upheavel at Mighty Marvel, we weren't just whistling "Changes." With Artful *Archie Goodwin* taking over as executive editor, Joltin' *John Warner*—former associate editor on the black-and-white Marvel mags—has ascended to the position of full-fledged editor, and big plans are in store as the b&w line expands into

previously untrod terrain.

First and foremost is a brand new black-and-white book featuring none other than the *Incredible Hulk*, in his own title—THE RAMPAGING HULK! All the stops have been pulled out on this one, gang, and top talent has been corralled to produce it. Scripting will be by Devil-May-Care *Doug Moench*, a Hulk fan since he was knee-high to a Green Goliath, and the art will be by Wonderous *Walt Simonson*, who's been known to have collected a few Hulk comics in his time, as well. Awesome *Alfredo Alcala* has dibs on the inks. Continuity will be maintained through the ingenious expedient of having this new book take place circa 1963, between the time ol' Greenskin lost his own short-lived title and later acquired a strip in TALES TO ASTONISH. If you've ever wondered what happened to the Hulk during that misty period, now is your chance to find out! Of course, dealing with the early Marvel Universe will also allow Doug to bring in any number of old Marvel favorites, which he intends to do, starting with the *original X-Men* in issue #2, and later the *early Avengers*, as well. And, lest we forget, Joyful *John Warner* himself—in addition to editing this new book—will also be writing the back-up strip, a revamped version of his own creation—BLOODSTONE. The first installment will be by Big *John Buscema*, who did a block-buster job. Future episodes will feature the artistry of the aforementioned Super *Simonson*, who'll be working closely with John to make this a real treat. The finished art will be by *Rudy Nebres*. The far-out first issue of THE RAMPAGING HULK will be on sale November 16th, so make absolutely sure you're *thooming* down to your local newsstand when it arrives!

The PLANET OF THE APES black-and-white will be sporting a new look soon. With the completion of the five movie adaptations, a new series is slated as a dynamic replacement—Astronaut *Derek Zane*, who has appeared twice before in the APES book, will be the star of the new strip. *Doug Moench*, dynamo of the typewriter, will be scripting and the tentative artist is Dapper *Don Perlin*. "Terror on the Planet of the Apes" moves ahead with the introduction of Alexander's parents, and the start of a strange twist in the relationship of *Jase* and *Alex*. New characters will intrude to keep events at high-intensity—so promise both Doug and Happy *Herb Trimpe*, and judging from their efforts thus far, we're inclined to believe 'em. A third series will round out the book every third or fourth issue, when Doug and Terrific *Tom Sutton* present more "Future History Chronicles," a mini-series contains some of the most fresh concepts and interesting outgrowths of the Apes stories to appear so far. Upcoming stories will feature futuristic devices seen through anachronistic perspectives, as visual wonders merge with startling ideas to coalesce into a unique series you must not miss.



Joltin' John

DOC SAVAGE has been gathering a loyal legion of fans, who've followed the Man of Bronze from his paperback triumphs into our black-and-white title. Dynamo Doug promises us an upcoming tale which will be set in Doc's own *Fortress of Solitude*. And, if that isn't enough, there'll be a special issue featuring *John Sunlight*, the only Savage villain ever to appear *twice* in the Doc Savage novels! *Tony DeZuniga* remains the regular—and spectacular—artist. For you real Savage fanatics, there'll also be a series of in-depth articles and fact pieces on each of Doc's *Fabulous Five* in issues to come.

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU—our longest running black-and-white title—continues to kick its way into the hearts of millions with bombastic comic art features and absorbing articles. The *Sons of the Tiger* will soon be reunited under bizarre circumstances, and the *White Tiger* will be remaining in the strip, as well. "Swordquest" will have its spectacular wind-up, followed by a two-part story scripted by *Chris Claremont* and drawn by newcomer *Marshall Rogers*, entitled "Daughters of the Dragon." The yarn will feature *Misty Knight* and *Colleen Wing* of the IRON FIST color book, in martial arts action of a different sort. Tentatively, "Daughters" will appear in issue #'s 32 & 33.

Marvel experimental black-and-white, MARVEL PREVIEW, will be having a special horror issue (#8) in lieu of the long-delayed *Man-God* feature, which will hopefully be making its appearance in #9. Still, we think you fear-fest fans will be flabbergasted by what we have in store for you—a "Legion of Monsters" issue featuring a spectacular tale of Marvel's own living vampire—*Morbius*—by Devil-May-Care *Doug Moench* and Slammin' *Sonny Trinidad*, who will knock you for the proverbial loop with the most terrifying occurrence yet in the cursed life of Michael Morbius. And then, switching to less outwardly—though no less macabre—horrifyng fare, we present Dauntless *Don McGregor* and Mischievous *Mike Ploog* in tandem for the first time ever on a bewitching tale of the outre regions entitled, "The Realty Manipulators"! There will also be a previously unrecorded escapade in the life of everyone's favorite vampire hunter—*Blade!* This is the job Joltin' John raves about in this very issue's biographical piece on Colan: it's a six page mini-chiller from the blood-stained typewriter of Marvelous *Marv Wolfman* and Gentleman *Gene Colan*, who really outdid himself on this one, pencilling, inking, and toning his own mind-stunning art. If you thought Colan could blow you away in color, wait'll you see him in *this* medium! And rounding out our "frightful four" is a brooding tale of ancient Egyptian horror, plotted by *Russ Jones*, written by editor *John Warner*, and illustrated by Valient *Val Mayerik*. You won't find a bigger bargain anywhere for your hard-earned buck, people!

Deparment of inFOOMation

LEN WEIN

[Editor/Writer: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN-INCREDIBLE HULK-MIGHTY THOR.]

In THOR, the Thunder God and his trio of companions will meet a space creature called *Sporr*, about whom Len tells us: "there's a lot more to the concept than might at first appear." An alien *Prometheus* story may be in the works, as our quartet of adventurers continues the quest for the missing *Odin*. The

Lively Len

Enchantress and the *Executioner* will be jumping back into the picture, as will Thor's half-brother, *Loki*. Remember the trio of new gods created by Almighty Odin several years ago in the mammoth Ego-Prime saga, affectionately named the "God Squad"? They have *not* been forgotten around here, either! More we cannot say. Len is also planning to introduce: "A new concept called the *God-Eaters*, which I'm not sure is the name I'll use when it finally appears." After the All-father is found, Thor and company will return to Midgard where Len plans: "An incredibly involved affair with Don Blake, Jane Foster, Sif, and Thor. It will be a very strange quadrangle. And I will bring *Don Blake* back as a major character. My feeling is that when Thor's in space, there's not much you can do with Don; but, on Earth, Blake will play a major role in the series." And speaking of romantic relationships, keep your Asgardian eye on *Balder the Brave* and *Karnilla*, Queen of the Norns.

The INCREDIBLE HULK will be moving to New York, courtesy of new-look-Len, for a more-or-less permanent residence. "*Bruce Banner*, who's fallen way into the sidelines, will soon become a real character. Also," says Len: "I'll be re-establishing that sense of a secret identity which Banner had. There'll be a major revamping of *Betty Ross*. She will no longer be the character we've all known and loathed all these years. Also, the mysterious references I made to a group known as *They* in my issues of MARVEL TEAM-UP will be written into the Hulk's continuity. *They* will show up as offstage figures while I finally resolve that storyline." *Jim Wilson* will be back, too, as will another Wilson—*Sam*, otherwise known as the high-flying *Falcon*. Glenn Talbot will exit the strip, but Thunderbolt Ross, Clay Quartermain, and Doc Samson will remain, not to mention an entirely new cast of players in New York City. Upcoming villains: the *Torpedo*, the *Absorbing Man*, and a new gent called the *Changeling*. And as if all that ain't enough, *Colossus* of the X-Men team will be around for an ish or two.

The AMAZING SPIDER-MAN is in for some strange and wondrous happenings. After the two part *Kingpin* story is completed, *Stegron*

Rapturous Ross

the Dinosaur Man (from MARVEL TEAM-UP) and Spidey's old foe, the *Lizard*, trash their way through a titanic two-parter. A spectacular battle sequence will culminate in Macy's *Thanksgiving Day Parade* on a pair of dinosaur skeletons from the Museum of Natural History! After that, the *Molten Man* will be back; a new hero/villain called *Will-O-the-Wisp* will appear; and, of all people, the long-gone *Green Goblin* reappears, about whom Len says: "It's not what you expect it to be at all." And he's the man who oughta know! A recent addition to Spidey's Rogue's Gallery, the *Human Fly*, will be making a comeback, somewhat revamped to better fit Len's original conception of the character. Harry Osborne and Liz Allen will probably be engaged, and a new addition to the cast—*Marla Madison*—will soon be making her debut. For those of you who've been wondering what's up with J. Jonah Jameson's star-cursed son, *John*, Len has this comment: "I won't be bringing him

Mighty Mike

back into the strip until *Dave Kraft* and *George Perez* complete the final two *Man-Wolf* stories for MARVEL SPOTLIGHT. After that, I'll consider using him."

And—somewhere in the future—

we might be seeing perhaps the *oldest* Spidey foe of all. Figure that one out for yourself, if you can, effendi!

Len has also scripted several special issues of MARVEL SPOTLIGHT which may soon be seeing print. The first is a *Doc Samson* solo outing, passionately pencilled by *George Tuska*, featuring the villainy of the *Rhino*. The second is one of the most outlandish characters of all, *Dominic Fortune*, whose only previous appearance was in the first and only issue of Marvel's black-and-white magazine, MARVEL SUPER-ACTION. This has been pencilled by Howlin' *Howie Chaykin*, who also did that earlier story, so don't miss it—especially since it also features *Dum Dum Dugan*, late of SGT. FURY! Len has also worked up a new group concept, on which *Bob Brown* has done the artistic honors. This as-yet-untitled team features four losers who have nothing to live for, so they're given something to die for by the most unexpected personage of all—*Destiny*, from Sub-Mariner's own late, lamented book.

MARV WOLFMAN

[Editor/Writer: DRACULA - DOC STRANGE - NOVA - POWER MAN.]

Meanwhile, Marvelous *Marv Wolfman* hasn't exactly been idle, himself, having assumed scripting and editing chores on a number of titles. No doubt the one he is most excited about is his own brainchild—

Marvelous Marv

NOVA. With only the first issue available at the time of this writing, an unprecedented amount of madly-ecstatic mail has arrived at the Bullpen, and if the sales figures are anywhere near as impressive, NOVA may be the unexpected sensation of the year. Over the next few months, you can expect to be seeing the subterranean menace of *Tyrannus* and his dreaded Earth-Shaker, as well as a new villain, tentatively titled *Disastro*. That enigmatic encounter will lead into a three-part tale, featuring *all* the major Nova villains thus far, and introducing the most important nemesis of his young life. Miss it at your own risk, Marvelite! As the strip progresses, a new *Trio of Doom* will be causing mayhem, featuring the old Captain America villain, *Diamondhead*, as well as two new fellas, *Condor* and *Powerhouse*. About the book, Marv says: "The whole cast is growing; it's taken several issues to get the thing moving and build up some subplots. And for those of you who thought it began like SPIDER-MAN, it should be evident by the fifth or sixth issue that it'll really be *nothing* like that book. It's simply that NOVA needed a place to start, and Spidey was as good a place as any." And just when you thought you had this one pegged, eh, pilgrim? *Sal Buscema* is artist on the strip.

Marvel's own street-wise POWER MAN—Luke Cage—will be on the receiving end of some changes courtesy of Marv, who'll be introducing a whole new bunch of characters, including a new hero/villain called *Thunderbolt* and a new villain the *Gold Bug*. The book will be going in several directions, mixing straight super-hero hijinks with detective stories which, according to Marv: "Don't sell as well as super-hero stories, but will be done anyway, since POWER MAN is so oriented towards that type of material." As for Luke's belligerent behavior, Marv will be: "...playing around with Cage's personality—he was born on the streets, thus his first reaction to things are usually violent." And so will our first reaction be, if you miss out on Marv's POWER MAN!

A son will be born to the Lord of Vampires in his monthly book, TOMB OF DRACULA, delivered by Marv and the inestimable art team of Genial *Gene Colan* and Titanic *Tom Palmer*. The new arrival will occur in #54, at which time Marv will be instituting a "name that son" contest, with the winner to receive a very special something (not a No-Prize), and all entries should be sent on postcards. In addition to his new child, there are other startling developments awaiting Dracula. In fact, everything that has occurred in the series for the last year—and everything that will be happening until the forthcoming March or April issues—has been but a *prologue* for a pivotal storyline that will bring a major change to the life of the Prince of Darkness. In other words, if you thought past events were mind-blowers, what's coming will destroy you completely, fearless vampire lovers!

With the departure of *Steve Englehart*, the scripting chores on DOCTOR STRANGE have fallen into Marv's more than capable hands. Because it's the one book at Marvel he's wanted to write more than any other, he's taking special care to give it the extra time it deserves. There will be a long-running plotline, a *Great Quest* of sorts, dealing with a concept Marv calls the *Quadroverse*, which is a four-pronged universe sectioned off

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for a specific reason, to be made clear as the serial progresses. For a more detailed explanation, Marv offered this: "The Quadroverse will be taking over our own universe foot by foot, light year by light year. As it touches our universe at any given point it destroys the existence of science and magic takes its place." The series will be less esoteric and philosophical, and here's why: "For those who've written in and complained that I've made some drastic changes in the DOCTOR STRANGE book, let me say that part of the reason is that the book wasn't selling based on the esoteric storylines—which I, myself, enjoyed. To keep the book alive and boost sales, I will do what is necessary and that will include adding specific villains and orienting the book in a somewhat more super-heroic vein. After several fill-in numbers by various artists, *Gene Colan* will return to pencil."

So there it is, people. Another ebullient edition of *In*FOOM*ation*. And one thing's for sure—whether you like what's coming or not, nobody can say we haven't warned you in advance. Face front, FOOM fans...and *keep reading!*

—Ralph Macchio

FINAL FOOM FLASHES! FINAL FOOM FLASHES! FINAL FOOM FLASHES!

Boy, have we got one lollapalooza of a load of late-breaking news for you, FOOM fans! Brace yourselves for the senses-stinging debut of SPIDER-WOMAN in a near-future issue of MARVEL SPOTLIGHT. Now don't go jumpin' to any hasty conclusions, pilgrims--'cause your batty Bullpen is out to prove just how offbeat we can be. Artful Archie Goodwin & Our Pal Sal Buscema have teamed up for this once-in-a-lifetime awesome effort, a titanic tale that even involves S.H.I.E.L.D. and Hydra. Look for it!

DEATHLOK is back at last, in not one but TWO book-length features from the Original House of Ideas; both are scheduled to appear soon! First, Kraft, Buckler, Jones & Janson pit the living Death Machine against the esoteric power and dark fury of--DEVIL SLAYER! Then, in the pulse-pounding pages of MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, the wondrous team of Wolfman & Wilson present the equally wondrous team-up of the THING & DEATHLOK...together for the very first time ever! It's cyborg time in the year of the Diamond Dog!

There are dreams dying in the shadows--and DRAGONSHADE is drowning in their twisted shapes! Dauntless Don McGregor & Torrid Tom Sutton have concocted a creature of shades, a last dragon spitting useless flames, for an as-yet-unspecified issue of DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU. The night-being is, they avow, unlike anything either of these two talents have ever worked on before, and he debuts in a stunning 30 page story!

Meanwhile, scholarly Sterno has carefully concocted ten tintinnabulatin' pages of new material, artfully illustrated by Gorgeous George Tuska, to act as a framing device for this year's sensational SUPER-HERO HOLIDAY GRAB-BAG...and, not to be outdone by this dazzling display of devotion, Dave the Dude & Roguish Roger Slifer have dialogued DEFENDERS #44 over colossal Keith Giffen artwork from a plot by vacationing editor Conway.

And we've saved another big scoop for last: After considerable agonizin', we've decided to let the cat outta the bag as regards Marv's secret projects (so secretively alluded to earlier in InFOOMation)! Two new titles are due to debut sometime in '77 that'll have ya cartwheelin' in the aisles and clutchin' your sides in ludicrous laughter--MIDAS, THE MILLION-DOLLAR MOUSE (drawn by that Lord of Letterers, John Costanza) and SUPER RABBIT, THE MARVEL BUNNY (illustrated by Snappy Sam Grainger). Both titles'll be written and edited by the Marvelous One, natch. Keep a sharp eye out for them, funny animal fans! We can say no more.

Remember: Don't succumb, read FOOM!

FINAL FOOM FLASHES! FINAL FOOM FLASHES! FINAL FOOM FLASHES!

FOOMTASTIC BRITISH FEATURE PAGE PREVIEW!

THE COMING OF CAPTAIN BRITAIN!

Imagine, if you will, an exclusively English superhero, done in the mighty Marvel manner by a trio of talented Anglophile enthusiasts, and appearing in his own wondrous *weekly* magazine! That's right, FOOM fans, premiering in a short few weeks on the ol' isle will be a nifty new mag, titled CAPTAIN BRITAIN. The good cap's real name is *Brian Braddock*, and he's a student at London's prestigious Thames University; a mystic amulet given him by a legendary goddess imbues him with super-strength, -speed and -agility and, combined with his *quarterstaff*, he's hopefully a match for some of the most vile villians ever to infest England (numbering among them *Hurricane*, *Dr. Synne* and the *Vixen*).

Each issue will contain 7-8 new action-packed pages of *Captain Britain*'s adventures, backed up by some of the mightiest Marvel masterpieces of old, printed for the first time ever in merry ol' England. Wotta treat! The series will be scripted by Cheerful *Chris Claremont*, and illustrated by Happy *Herb Trimpe* and Fantastic *Fred Kida*, under the able editorial direction of Larrupin' *Larry Lieber*, himself. So who says matchless Marvel doesn't cater to its farflung foreign fans? Certainly not lucky Britons!

NEXT ISSUE

A dazzling in-depth interview with the most talented (and nice!) lady in comics — MARIE (the She) SEVERIN

Sky-diving Bullpenners on display in swooping shots that will stun and amaze!

Bombastic behind-the-scenes buzz on fabulous forthcoming features from Mighty Marvel!

Plus the awesome announcements all Marveldom Assembled has eagerly been awaiting — THE IRVING AWARDS!

And more art, photos, facts and far-out features about the bashful Bullpen than ever before!

Friends of Ol' Marvel — if your sensational subscription to FOOM is about to run out or — heaven forfend — if you don't have a subscription to begin with or — finally — if you have a subscription, but your best friend doesn't and would like one very much... well then, just fill out the following subscription blanks and send 'em winging our way. Ya won't regret it, pilgrim, we promise ya!

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